



A SONG OF FAITH



△△ CHRISTIAN △△
△△ JONATHAN △△
OEHL SCHLÄGER



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A Song of Faith

*Καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ Τχοτία Ταίνει
Καὶ ἡ Τχοτιά αὐτό οὐ κατέλαβεν.
—Nov. Test.*



A Song of Faith

BY
CHRISTIAN JONATHAN OEHLISCHLÆGER

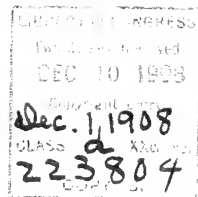
*A Lyric Poem in
Four Books and
Twenty Cantos*



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It was Goethe who said; "There is no conflict so interesting to mankind as the conflict of Faith and Unbelief." Read this song of Faith with understanding and, if you have it, with sympathy, and I trust you will feel this interest, together with the sweet spell of poetry and the thrilling desire for the song still unsung.

The Author.

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Book I
The Simplicity of Faith



Book I—Canto the First

Tell, Muse, of Light afflated,
With time-extinguishing ken,
Of things long past, as present,
That into the What the When
Be changed by its truth unchanging;
That, from the soul within,
The conflict into life unfold,
In breaking bonds of sin;
And, in the scintillating light
From Faith's old conflict ever bright,
As issue, we may see
The eagle rise in fairer skies,
On wings of Liberty.
Tell how the bard his hero saw,
With Christiana, his bride,
In light apocalyptic,
'Mid storms of midnight-tide,
And sang to them of liberty,
In dawn most glorious;
And how his heart with them took part
In all their trials; and thus
Tell, in his words with sweet accords
From fountains which his life affords,
How Ladislaus led by zeal
Of faith and love, as Christian knight,
Took arms for Christians' weal,
Oppressed by infidelic power,
In holy Jerusalem.

A Song of Faith

How thither by Christiana,
Of brides the diadem,
He faithfully was followed,
Enduring the trials of faith,
Until, on the Mount of Olives,
The bard, unconscious, a wreath
Of glory, of deeds of glory, wreathed
For her devoted lord,
And she herself, in siege, did see
The glory of his sword;
How, then, united in the truth,
As sung by the Christian bard,
Together, their journey homeward
Perfidious wiles retard,
And faith and love their power must
prove
O'er darkness to prevail,
Before the bliss of union sweet
In peaceful home they hail.

In sight of Salem's stormy walls,
Beneath the clouded sky,
On waves of thought the bard reclined,
And scanned the prospect nigh;
It brightened, now the firmament
Was cleared of the passing cloud;
His soul's strong light then breaking
forth,
He spake to himself aloud:

"From works of sinful mortals,
I turn to the works of God;
Into His kingdom's boundless realm
My spirit looks abroad.

Book I—Canto the First

Pure as the sun's bright beams it glows
In glory clothed and might,
And all the works of God on high
Are perfect, in perfect light;
They are my spirit's very strength,
The fount of joy and life;
Of faith they are the mighty tower,
In this world's weary strife.

“ Creation! O, Creation!
The work of God's All-might,
In light of Love's all-seeing eye—
In providential light!
And thus the Lord's creative word
Still works, upholding all;
In Him we live and being have,
So that, where forms do fall
A prey to Time's destructive hand,
Again they appear in youth,
Renewed by His almighty power,
Upheld by His word of truth.

“ Redemption! O, Redemption!
The work of almighty love,
To sinful mortals stooping down,
With grace and truth from above!
Decreed in the heart of God on high,
Enacted in the world,
In filling of all prophecies,
Its glories are unfurled.
O, prophets' word, word of the Lord!
Sure word of prophecy!
In darkness here, thou shinest clear,
My faith doth look to thee;

A Song of Faith

May now the day dawn in my heart,
And as in morning skies,
Anew, anew, and ever new,
The Day-star now arise.

“Awake, my soul, shake off dull sloth,
Sing the Redeemer’s praise;
With songs unsung He fills my soul;
What weak strains may I raise,
To bless His name forever dear,
Here in the land He trod?
O, Jesus Christ, true Son of Man!
O, Christ, thou Son of God!
And oh! the Holy Spirit’s work,
The work of the Holy Ghost!
How pure, how peaceful, all aglow
With tongues of Pentecost!
Without a sword, but with the word,
From Zion, in power thine,
O, Christ! He went to spread thy reign
Of grace and truth divine.”

Whilst thus the bard was musing high,
A maiden suddenly broke
Into his raptured vision nigh,
Which did from him evoke
A fleeting interruptious sigh,
Soon turned to sympathy;
For it was Christiana fair,
In meek nobility;
The beauty of her majesty,
With every potent charm,
Stood forth, in commanding meekness,
O’er fear and sudden alarm.

Book I—Canto the First

Then all possessed she him addressed,
In air of glad relief,
As one just come from journey full
Of hardships and of grief:
“Thank God! at last, a friendly face,
In the Holy Land, I see;
The joy it gives the freedom gives
To me, to speak to thee;
For there the army I behold,
The Cross, and Jerusalem,
And thy kind face assurance gives
Thou surely art of them.
I am a lonely pilgrim,
Through many griefs have come
To this far-distant country;
Love drew me from my home,
Where nothing held me from its
call,
To wander hither alone;
Here all to me are strangers all,
All, all are strangers, but one.”

To which the bard, with high regard:
“Thy words are sweet as song;
To thee the fullest freedom doth
By right of thy love belong;
I am a bard, delighting in
Records of noble deeds;
No one with any loving deed,
A deed of right more needs,
But finds at once an entrance
Into my tenderest heart;
To me the greater is the joy,
The more I can impart.

A Song of Faith

Though not a knight in armor bright,
I follow the Holy Cross,
To sing the deeds of glory high
Which serve its holy cause;
I know the knights which serve it
here.

To many I am known,
So, welcome, noble lady fair,
No stranger more, nor alone."
And Christiana, full of thanks,
Assured the humble bard,
His words possessed the boon of rest
To her, who had journeyed hard.
"But while I rest," she calmly said,
And looked on the host below,
"Pray, tell me names and deeds and
fames
Of those whom thou must know."

"With joy," he said; "There's Godfrey,
first,
Of deep and ruling power;
Before his sword and mighty word
All opposition must cower.
There's Baldwin, bold and errant;
Than any other knight,
In vain he has more battles won,
Regardless of wrong or right.
There is Tancred, the tender-hearted,
A pious knight and brave;
As bold, to take the strongest hold,
As brave, the weak to save.
There is robust Norman Robert,
A knight of unbending will,

Book I—Canto the First

Of unrelenting anger and
Accommodating skill.
There is Robert fine, of Flanders,
A dashing and daring knight;
His conquering dash is like a flash,
But knows his time for flight.
There is gallant Raymond, the refined,
A lover of romance;
His singers sing his conquering,
In mixed accents of France.
There is Eustace, the gay and youthful,
And full of the fire of youth;
His deeds renown have brought him,
As well as many a ruth;
But faithful to his brother's,
The noble Godfrey's, word,
The service is not little, he
Has rendered with his sword.
There is Bela, the baleful-hearted,
And bitter, in his sloth,
To all who wear some honor fair,
And garments of better cloth.

“Of these and of many more,” the bard
Turned in his tale, to say,
“And of their deeds and wondrous
fame,
To thee I could sing all day,
And not have made beginning yet;
But, come, let us higher go
To strains of fame all bright and pure,
In light from above aglow
In light of righteousness and truth,
Which ever remains the same,

A Song of Faith

And from vain loves and honors vain,
Directs to a higher aim.
So, of my hero I will sing,
The hero of my soul;
Lo, there in the light, his ensign bright,
It shows his lofty goal,
In letters of gold on beams of light—
See! 'Nearer, my God, to thee.'"
But flowing tears had dimmed her
eyes,
That she could hardly see;
Albeit, she the motto read,
Herself had wrought, on the shield,
As, in a halo of rapture there,
Its light spread o'er the field.

Then after a sympathetic pause,
Thus further sang the bard:
"His name is Ladislaus, the fair,
They call him Buda's lord;
A hero he of purpose high,
His duty he knows and does,
Regardless of himself, as well,
As both of friends and foes;
Whenever to a pass he comes,
He comes, as from a strife,
Which deep is raging, in his soul—
A secret of his life.
Back from his feet the past must roll,
As he climbs higher and higher,
For 'Nearer to God' his motto is,
His soul's all-ruling desire.
At Antioch of Christian fame
They were in near defeat,

Book I—Canto the First

But he, like a host from heaven, came,
And back the enemy beat.
And when the heroes, on their march,
In envious strifes engaged,
He like a peaceful herald came
And bitter feuds assuaged.
One time, it was when all the host,
Encamped, at Sidon lay,
And Ladislaus unrestful
And haunted had been all day
By flitting calls mysterious
Of some enamored fair,
(For thus, they say, he haunted is)
And heavy was with care—
When Bohemund and Raymund
Against each other raged.
At first, it was a war of words,
In which they loud engaged;
But soon it grew to action bold,
His forces each one called,
And stood in posture threatening,
The army stood appalled.
Then Buda's lord, upon his steed
Of ponderous damask flanks,
Undaunted rode between them,
Between the opposing ranks;
They called aloud with anger proud,
That he should clear the field;
But he stood there unmovedly,
At rest his lance and shield,
And said: 'If ye are bound to fight
And stain with Christian blood
Your Cross-devoted weapons bright,
O'er me you make your road.'

a Song of Faith

And peace restored by noble word
Which came from peaceful will,
The cataract of anger soon
Ran still, as a peaceful rill,
O'er which the Christian heroes there
Soon grasped each others' hands,
Of brotherhood, in strong repair,
Renewing their broken bands.

"Another time lord Bela was,
With Walter of Verra, sent out,
A stronghold of the foe to break,
And take their strong redoubt;
But on the way they quarreled,
And could not, at all, agree
About the honor of the work;
And pressing, as it might be,
The envious lords had time for
words,
For action, none at all,
When Buda's lord, with ready sword,
Happed in their way to fall.
He sharply then reproved them both;
Lord Bela, friend of his youth,
More sharply than the other knight,
And soundly told him the truth.
Lord Bela then to pouting fell,
And said: 'Now fight alone!'
He thought their disappointment
Would soon for his grief atone;
For Ladislaus, with all his men,
So few, could not last long,
And Bela against the enemy
Had made the detachment strong.

Book I—Canto the First

In numbers vast, like clouds ablaze,
The Saracen force came forth;
Just as when, in the autumn-grove,
A mighty blast, from the North,
The dust and leaves with might upheaves
And drives a darkling cloud,
With shrieks of birds and animals,
And rolling thunder loud,
So came with shrieks and savage yells,
And thunder of tramping horse,
The whole broad landscape darkening,
The swarthy Saracen force.
The only light was lightning,
Which from their sabres shone,
And then the broken, flickering,
Low sickle of the moon.
Fair Buda's lord, an eagle like,
With clear intrepid eye,
Into the cloud undaunted plunged,
And, swinging his sword on high,
To right and left—just like that bird,
With ponderous sweep and stroke—
So he, with sweeping Balmung,
His way through the darkness broke.
Brave Walter of Verra followed him,
As borne by higher force,
Close on his right, aflaming bright,
And widened the beaten course;
In this then both their warriors
Close wedged, to right and left,
And through the thundering column dark
A trembling clearance cleft.
There 'twas that Verra's Walter fair
Closed with the mighty Moseck,

A Song of Faith

A brave whose hair and beard outshone
The mane on his charger's neck;
And fierce of flash and quick of crash,
As was that charger's breath,
Now snuffing storm, from fallen forms,
In smoking swath of death.
With prudence, intuition quick,
He Buda's lord had shunned;
From Balmung's mighty flashes bright,
His vantage he had conned;
So, this he took, and, glancing off,
On Walter straight bore down;
Like, in a cloud, his blade did flash,
His eye, in a swarthy frown.
And, like a tiger, approaching him,
He gave Lord Walter a cut,
So keen and quick, past noticing,
That Walter onward put,
With knightly blows on turbaned
head,
And deemed the victory won;
When, lo, Lord Walter quavered
And trembled the light of the sun.
The blood within him, from the wound,
Had taken strength from his heart,
And weakness' clouds, as death-dark
shrouds,
Had spread to every part.
At this the lord of Buda fair
With violent anger burned,
And cried with haste of fury's blast,
As to Moseck he turned:
'O, viper vile of villainy!
Thou devil's dodging dog!

Book I—Canto the First

Prepare thee for thy punishment,
I'll lay thee low as a log!'
And taking in hand his mighty brand,
A circle in air he made;
Like thunder-struck, so fell Moseck,
With riven helm and head;
Their mighty leader fallen thus,
The enemy quickly fled.
Then Ladislaus wept bitterly
The knights to him so dear,
Most at the strokes perfidious,
But joyed at the glory clear,
In which they all had fallen;
And said: 'O, heroes! rest,
Now rest in light of glory bright,
High in the realms of the blest!
How gladly I would follow you,
But here I'm called to fight
For Jesus and His people's cause
And for the Gospel light.'"

As showers to the drooping flowers,
So, to Christiana's heart,
The reminiscent interest
The words of the bard impart.
This, too, he soon observed and
then,
Encouraged, thus went on:
"The task of noble Buda's lord,
Howbeit, was not yet done;
His heroes he together called,
And, having their comrades mourned,
And made secure the plunder,
To Bela he soon returned,

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To make report of finished work ;
But, lo, he saw from far
The tumult, toil and turmoil loud,
And heard the horror of war.
For sore beset was Bela now,
By sudden unequal attack
Of Arabs swart, with flashing blades,
On fleetest steeds of black.
They fought, like furies in the fray,
Lord Bela held his own,
In dire despair, with shrinking dare,
While many were overthrown,
Who bore the Cross beside him ;
And he, like a stag at bay,
Held by besetting mastiffs fierce,
Was fighting his strength away.
Brave Ladislaus soon saw the cause
Of dire emergency ;
The sight gave to his mind's resolve
The wings of the wind, that he,
With wingéd words to right and left,
And spurs to his horse's flanks,
And Balmung spreading panic far,
Attacked the enemy's ranks.
On, on he pressed to Bela's aid,
And came to his sinking side,
Just when an Arab swart about
To pierce his friend, he spied.
He cried with voice of flashing thought,
With threatening Balmung raised :
' Hold hither now ! ' and much amazed,
The Arab turned and gazed.
And Buda's lord his steed did curb ;
He saw a familiar face—

Book I—Canto the First

The face of the noble, brave Ameer
Who, once, with noble grace,
In Lebanon's forests wide and wild,
Had saved from hunger and cold,
And given him meat and bread to eat,
And rest, in his mantle's fold.
One stared, and said the other :
' And that is thou, Buda's lord?
And will thy heart permit thee,
To raise against me thy sword?
I see in thine eye, fair as the sky,
Thou knowest me and from whence ;
Thy heart and honor thee must tell,
To stand from this conflict hence.
To honor and friendship I appeal,
Stand hence, and let us alone ;
Those shrines shall not be stained with
blood,
But blood the wrong shall atone.'
And Buda's lord made answer :
' O, noble and brave Ameer!
Thy noble words do strike strong cords,
Within my bosom here!
Thy mercy shown to me forlorn
Still lives here in my heart!
With life, which thou didst comfort then,
For thee I'd gladly part!
But never can I bounden be
The life of one to yield,
With whom together I am bound,
On faith's great battlefield.'
Then did the Ameer more swart
appear,
And pale, like a sunless cloud ;

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He muttered in his bosom deep,
And spake with disdain aloud :
‘ O, Buda’s lord, of noble mind !
Both friendship and revenge,
And all that men call honor fair,
To thy high mind must cringe.
But never will I thus cringe to it,
Although the fate I bewail,
Which even with thee a difference
On me doth now entail.’
‘ The same, O, brave Orcan, I say,
Do I bewail, alas !
Withdraw from Bela thy hand
to-day,
And I will let thee pass !’
Thus spake the lord of Buda fair,
And put his Balmung by,
Extending his hand to brave Orcan,
Who waved it away, with a sigh :
‘ No never will I thus cringe to it ;’
He spake, and javelin took,
‘ Now, to thine honor, set so high,
Thine heaven-pledged honor look !’
And Buda’s lord did look to it,
For, with a furious dash,
Upon him rushed the brave Ameer,
And with a thundering crash.
But Buda’s lord was not alarmed ;
The lance, on his solid shield,
Was splintered, and its fragments
flew
Wide over the frightened field.
Then did the Ameer his saber take,
Which flashed, in dexterous hand,

Book I—Canto the First

'Gainst which the Christian's Balmung
looked

A clumsy awkward brand.

The Ameer made a sweeping raid,

Now shooting straight as a dart,

Most sure to pierce, with speed so fierce,

His brave antagonist's heart.

But finding this on guard to his,

He dodged a counter stroke;

With pass and turn and feint he then

His movements swift did cloak;

That Buda's lord was puzzled hard,

To follow his endless gyres,

And wearied and strained, with passes
vain—

An effort which always tires.

They fought alone; the field was
clear,

For others' hearts were moved,

With admiration and with fear,

Which both were soon disproved.

I said, when I the story heard:

So human reason and wit,

Against the Truth, with dexterous hand,

Is praised for every hit,

While fear makes tremble for the

Truth

The wavering hearts of men;

So stood weak Bela trembling

And all the knights, to the ten,

Admiring, with the Arabs swart,

The feats of the bold Ameer,

These, spelled with exultation loud,

And those, with growing fear.

A Song of Faith

From this dark shade, with glittering
blade,
Fair Buda's lord did bound,
And in the light, with Balmung bright,
Orcan was cast aground;
His dazzling brand, from dexterous
hand,
From head, his burgonet
Were scattered, and his features dark
Were covered with blood and sweat.
'For life,' he said, 'I beg thee not,
But to thine honor appeal;
One turn deserves another,
Thou surely this must feel.'
To which the victor frankly said:
'Thou hadst no need to say
What I, without thy saying, felt;
Requited, go thy way.'
Meanwhile, when all the issue saw,
Emboldened, each Christian knight
Took up the chase of the enemy,
Who soon had taken to flight.
In glory thus, victorious,
The Christian heroes returned;
The name and fame of victory
By Bela were not spurned;
But, decking himself with spoil and pelf,
He back to the Christian camp,
In glory rode and boasting pomp,
With loud and exultant tramp."

The bard his story ended here,
For now it was growing late,
Reluctant, as thus cutting short
What fain he'd further narrate.

Book I—Canto the Second

THUS on the mount of Olivet,
Fair Christiana slept,
In peace, her restful slumber;
But, wakeful, the bard still kept
The watches of the stilly night,
On glowing wings of thought,
In border-lands of Memory
And Fancy, highly wrought,
How his fair guest had pilgrimed far,
And drawn by love alone
To one fair knight, with armor bright;
Ah! yes; who was that one?
Was it his soul's bright hero,
Whom, too, from Danube's strand,
His songs from hymens sweet had sung
To war in the Holy Land?
Hear, hear! these songs, agreeing
Throughout with his noble guest;
She must the bride from Buda be,
Who now in his tent did rest.
How true the power of Faith and Love,
In higher and lower sphere!
It bridegroom and his bride unites,
As in these songs ye hear.
In Buda's sylvan grove he stood,
His face, on the Danube bent;
The peaceful waves that mirrored by,
In color and moisture blent

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With his sad eyes, fair as the skies;
His well-proportioned length
From tender down of youth had grown
To figure of manly strength.
He turned his face to Buda fair,
In which the castle-walls
Stood high with many a tower strong,
And grand ancestral halls;
Great thoughts from his expression
flashed,
And grandeur gave to his form,
As when the lightning flashes broad
Interpret the coming storm:
"O, Adelbert! my father,
Thy kingdom devolves on me,
Since, with the harvest of thy years,
Thou'st entered eternity;
Thy locks and beard the color bore
Of thy life's purity;
May it to me an image be
Of what was good in thee!
As o'er thy dying, father,
Thy people mourned, in one voice,
So over thy son, while living,
May they have cause to rejoice!"

Fair Buda was filled with mourning
For Adelbert, the kind;
When Ladislaus, the son, appeared,
It was, their hearts to remind,
Of what, in the father, they had lost,
And what, in the son, had won;
So, at his sight, there came a light
O'er them, as when the sun

Book I—Canto the Second

Breaks through the mists of morning
 clouds,
And hangs the propitious bow
O'er stooping fields and waking flowers
And weeping groves below.
He entered his ancestral halls,
His fathers had adorned
With scenes of story glorified
To him, who for them mourned.
His courtiers came around him all,
To take allegiance;
Each, in his place, looked for some grace,
Him onward to advance;
And every word of their new lord
Both wide and cleanly swept,
Through changes few and nothing new
He made, but order kept.
Withal, important was the work
And bore upon his mind,
Because his heart, like Adelbert's,
To every one was kind.

So, evening with a longing came
For rest and solitude;
The duties, from his father's death,
Were heavy upon his mood;
But now a tumult on the streets
Of gathering crowds is heard;
They follow to his castle grounds
A man, with sable beard.
'Tis Peter, from the Holy Land,
With love to Christ, the Lord,
Whose Sepulcher was held by fear
Of wicked Saracen's sword.

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He there held up and waved his hand,
And spake to the listening crowd:
"O, Christians all, both great and small,
Shall I not be allowed,
To tell you of disgrace and shame,
That's come upon our Faith?
Dark infidels to-day do hold
The place of our Saviour's death!
Can we, who love the Name, so dear,
Who are called by that dear Name,
Behold unmoved, this crying wrong,
This heaven-crying shame?
No; we must our own might assert,
And set those places free
From Saracen and infidel,
And from their tyranny,
So that our Christian brethren dear
May freely go and adore
The Saviour dear who suffered here,
Recorded in Christian lore."
Just then the king was seen high on
A balcony above;
The people all expectant looked
If Buda's lord would approve.
He pointed with eyes, fair as the skies,
To his emblazoned shield,
With lark in light ascending bright,
In gold, on sunlit field.
"As, 'nearer my God to thee,' it saith,
The lark in ascending goes,
So all my power shall be, it saith,
My God, at thy dispose;"
He spake, and to the people then,
"We'll do whatever we can

Book I—Canto the Second

To break the heathen tyranny,
And free from heathen ban
The Sepulcher for brethren dear,
The faithful pilgrim band,
Who light the fires of Christian love,
Within that Holy Land.”
The people, like a grove were moved,
Whose fronds by winds are stirred
To one grand sound from all around;
So now these people were heard:
“Our best, O, King! we’ll give to thee,
’Tis at thy command any time,
To free our Savior’s Sepulcher,
And punish the heathen crime.”
“Good people!” said King Ladislaus,
“Your hearts with love are ablaze,
And so is mine desirous too
Our banner of light to raise;
Thus may our steel be tempered well,
Our purpose firmly set,
And we will all assemble soon,
Our glorious work to abet.”
He spake and with a gesture bowed,
And from his expression flowed
To all a calm dismissal,
To go to their hearth’s abode.
As when the forest, after rain,
The evening breezes bend,
And to the ruffled lakelet’s bed
The sparkling rain-drops send,
So eyes, which on the king did hang,
In admiration bright,
Were loosed by his dismissal calm,
To seek repose for the night.

A Song of Faith

Within fair Buda's burgh there stood
The mansion of old Kanute,
Whose fame was heard with every word
And name of good repute;
Whose palace walls were covered all
With scenes from every land,
From which renown had come to
crown

The prowess of his hand.
Here, in her private chamber,
All bright with tapers' glare,
And decorations beautiful,
Of royal-ancestral air,
Stood Christiana, daughter fair,
The only one of Kanute,
And, like her father's fame, now shone
Her present beauty's repute.
The preacher's word she, too, had heard,
Of land of sacred lore.

Where Christ of life the crosses hard,
For us, poor mortals, bore;
She thought of the shame upon His
name,

That all these places were
Now in the hand of infidel
Beneath the Crescent's glare.
Just then of the coming of the king
She duly was apprised;
And what she vaguely had desired
She plainly realized.

She quickly to the present turned,
Like one scared out of a dream,
And ready made, to honor him,
Held high in love's esteem.

Book I—Canto the Second

Enchantment, loath to leave the place,
Still hovered about the room,
Like humming birds, in happy June,
About the rose-bud's bloom,
Thus adding life to beauty's charm,
Which sits, in quiet blush,
Whilst airy wings its glowing flush
With airlike movements brush.
She turned her face with heavenly
grace,

And moved toward the door,
Like one whom wings invisible
Of love and rapture bore.
His greeting met with answer meet,
She took his heart-warm hand,
In every word, both felt the cord —
Of love the heart-warm band.

"I've come," he said, "to tell thee,
My tenderly cherished bride—
But first I long for quiet rest,
At thy most restful side.
How sweet the repose thy presence
gives !

This evening, Oh! how vast!
Methinks, thine eyes beholding now,
Myself on the sea-shore cast,
When tide and waves are calm at rest
And giving the same to me,
Whilst in the realm of vision, lo,
There quivers serenity."
With chaste caress his hand she pressed,
And said: "My brave Ladislaus!
No wonder that thou weary art,
For great is the care of thy house,

A Song of Faith

So sudden on thy shoulders laid,
By death of Adelbert!
Oh! how the King's departure doth
Our hearts with sorrow hurt!
In glorious wars the trophied scars
Of valor and prowess he won;
In times of peace his mercies shone,
Calm, as the Autumn-sun;
His reign remained pure and unstained
By deeds of violence,
His justice strict and equal drove
All flatterers from hence.
No wonder that thou weary art,
And sad, my Ladislaus!
For great the care and burden is,
And sorrow of thine house!"
"Ah! yes," he said, and bowed his head,
"The care is precious and great,
And tender my heart's shoulders are
Beneath its pressing weight;
But while the wound is still unbound,
Into my heart is distilled
The dew of fame from father's name,
To fulfill, as he fulfilled,
The duties of a Christian man,
Of king and of Christian knight,
In Mercy's light, in justice bright,
And warfare for the right."
Fair Christiana answered then:
"No further tell, for I know;"
With trembling look, she almost shook:
"And thou art resolved to go?
Alas! the smart, so soon to part!
And must it be so soon?"

Book I—Canto the Second

Oh! wait, Oh! wait the autumn sun,
Oh! wait another moon!"
He firmly spake and tenderly:
"I am resolved to go,
And help, with Christian forces
mine,
The heathen to o'erthrow;
Already war is raging far,
Already from Christian lands
The gallant chiefs are gathering
The sturdy warrior bands;
Already holy memories
Of Palestina's soil
Are drinking blood of Christian men,
Beneath the Saracen's spoil;
To-night my heralds sounding go,
Through every village and town,
The sound of to-morrow's gathering
Upon the trysting ground;
There will the heroes chosen be,
According to prowess and will,
The ranks of the Christian army
Beneath the Cross to fill.
Forthwith we'll ride, without abide,
Our neighing steeds to the fray,
And, under the sun's and moon's fair
light,
Make one the night and day."
Most tender leave he took of her,
And, as he op'ed the door,
The breezes, sounding far and near,
The notes of the bugles bore,
With echo of his parting words,
As heard by his tender bride;

A Song of Faith

“Forthwith to the fray, without delay,
Our neighing steeds we'll ride.”
All night the herald's bugle-notes
Were heard in village and town,
Announcing to-morrow's gathering
Upon the trysting ground.
As when the birds of passage,
From north to south, in the Fall,
In darkness lost and scattered far,
Send forth their anxious call;
Now here, now there, now distant far,
The lonely sound is heard:
So now the heralds' bugle-notes
The nightly breezes stirred.
And like those birds all scattered far,
In meshes of the night,
Yet soon again assembled are,
By rays of the morning light;
So from all sides the heroes ride;
To Buda fair they came,
As soon as the East, from her warm
breast,
Sent forth the sun's first flame;
In joyful circles gathering,
They rode their steeds around,
And, in discordant choruses,
Sent forth a joyful sound;
Their white plumes play, in dazzling
ray,
And flow, like drifting snow,
O'er steeds of white, as when the winds
O'er Alpine glaciers blow.
So Adelbert had decked them,
To amuse him in the tilt,

Book I—Canto the Second

To thew them for the battle,
Their hands, unto the hilt,
Their bodies, for the saddle,
Their prowess, for the thrust,
Their heart and lungs, for courage,
And for the conflict's dust.
“For so of the times they me remind,
Those grand old times,” he said;
“Alas! my friends and comrades all,
Of those grand times now dead!”
And then the heroes he'd exhort:
“Ring out your joyful words!
Join in the friendly tournament,
And swing your dazzling swords!
Your lances bright set you aright,
Your eye on the fated goal!
And show, in your unbending thrust,
The metal of your soul!”
Of former jousts remindful,
When Adelbert's voice still lived,
At first, the assembled warriors,
Because for him they grieved,
All pranced about but quietly,
And joined in spits and spats,
As boys upon a holiday
Knock off each other's hats.
But soon the bee of victory,
On scales of vanity,
Bore down the balance twittering
To bitter rivalry.
It was between two warriors;
The one, from fields of the North,
From town, the other, of the South,
With one mind, had come forth.

A Song of Faith

'Twas Lothar, from the North, that had
With skillful charge and thrust,
The mastery o'er Lythke gained,
In friendly joust and just;
Then Lythke, he of the South, did see,
While yielding, in the eye
Of Lothar, a triumphant air
Which set his feelings awry;
Stung by the bee of victory,
Of rivalry the grace
Withdrew its taste, from his firm breast,
Its light from his fair face.
As when in sultry summer time
Dark clouds come o'er the sun,
Its forces quickly gathering,
The threatening storm comes on,
So Lythke dark, with muscles stark,
And thunder of a frown,
His willing charger urging on,
With mighty thrust bore down
On Lothar; but he turned around
With ready lance and shield;
And so the issue doubtful was,
Who of the two should yield.
The danger grew, as lances flew,
In shivers, out of sight;
And shieldless swords with angry words
Began their friends to fright.
At this, the lord of Buda fair,
In graceful step rode by;
He stopped his horse and mustered force,
With twinge in his fair eye.
All stood in awe, when him they saw,
The two, more than the rest;

Book I—Canto the Second

They dropped their arms, in mild alarm,
And waited his behest.
“Dismount!” he said to all around,
As he there touched the ground;
And all obeyed in order calm,
And silence most profound:
“My noble hero warriors!
I’m glad to see you all;
You’ve come in quick obedience
To our good cause’s call;
The Cross we bear, to plant it there,
In its original soil,
Released from the dark tryanny,
The wicked Saracen’s spoil.
Mechanics of our Buda fair
Are making the weapons now,
And faithful men are driving in
Black steeds from cart and plow,
Fair dames are busy plying
The needle and the shears,
Their loves thus satisfying,
Allaying their anxious fears.
With needle-work they’re piercing
The costly fabrics through,
With gold and silver colors,
On fields of faithful blue:
The lark on shield, in rising field,
In rays of the rising sun,
Which motto bear, in circle clear,
In golden letters done,
Of ‘Nearer, my God, to thee.’ Ah! yes,
To God we live or die,
And thus to Him we nearer press,
Whose name is love on High.

A Song of Faith

New mails, forsooth, are needed,
The old are rusty and worn;
And blades and lances broken are,
And shields are pierced and torn.”
He spake, and looked at Lothar
And Lythke, with speaking glance,
Who stood, with crests upon their
breasts,
Receiving the looks askance
Which all now threw upon the two;
Then all looked up to the king;
A smile was on his countenance,
Which now was the very thing,
Of laughter irrepressible
To break the long-pressed dam;
And forth it gushed and forth it rushed,
And vented the hard-pent jam
Of feelings contradictory
Of fear and of peace restored;
And Lothar and Lythke joining in,
The army in laughter roared.
Then Lothar and Lythke forward came,
And met there face to face;
Their friendship there, in strong repair,
Renewing in warm embrace,
They spake and words from heart to
heart,
As from pure metal rang,
As forth they flowed from love to God,
From which this new song sprang:
“O, brother! let us brothers be!
And e’er confess our wrong;
May faith and love our hearts unite,
And make our union strong!

Book I—Canto the Second

Until the dark, dark heathen power,
Is chased from the Holy Land,
And we on Salem's walls shall stand,
Triumphant, hand in hand!"

And now the lord of Buda fair,
With Chieftain's knowledge and skill,
His chosen heroes mustered in,
According to prowess and will.
The first he chose were Lothar
And Lythke, with fallen crest;
For thus their courage to restore
His wisdom deemed it best.
Then further chose he from the rest
The strongest and most brave,
Whose merit to all apparent was,
Who their approval gave;
Till fifty knights, in armor bright,
A chosen hero band,
Stood ready for the holy war
Far in the Holy Land.
To these devoted fifty men
He further order gave,
Each should select a chosen ten,
All heroes willing and brave.

Book I—Canto the Third

FROM Buda fair the Hermit had
Walked on in journey long;
His fiery zeal had nerved his will,
And made his members strong;
The sound of the heralds' bugle-notes
Gave music to his tread,
And tokened him, that his grand theme
A strong impression had made.
The morning with a gleam had come,
And streaming tresses of gold,
Which fresh from hillocks of the waves,
The Day-star, rising bold,
Had flung on Ether's shoulders fair
And scattered a dewy spray
O'er fields and fens and gladsome glens,
All hailing the coming day;
And on the brow of Peter now
The balmy moisture fell,
And waked his soul from its long dole,
The morning song to swell.
The hawk on lazy pinions,
In sultry air, high soared,
And drops of sweat, from locks all wet,
O'er Peter's forehead poured;
The sun burnt nigh, though now most
high,
In zenith of the sky,
When Peter to a streamlet came,
Which freshly rippled by.

Book I—Canto the Third

Desire for rest now filled his breast
And for refreshment sweet,
So in the shade he cast himself
His frugal meal to eat.
He dined, and of the streamlet drank,
And thought of Jacob's well,
Of which he drank, in Palestine,
Till sleep on his eye-lids fell.
Then forth into the land of dreams
His fiery spirit went,
While on the mission of his life
His waking soul was bent.

He dreamed he on a mountain stood,
All Europe lay in view;
His preaching rolled, like thunder loud,
Like lightning flashes flew,
And spread out wide, on every side,
O'er villages and towns
Which quick were with a bustle filled,
Of people and priests in gowns.
Then followed a scene, as when the floods
Break through their time-worn dykes,
And rush, in streams and columns dark,
O'er plains and fields and pikes;
So poured the people Eastward now,
From mansions high and low;
All decked alike, in armor bright,
To the holy war to go.
On, on, the streams came rolling on,
In surging, mighty waves;
White plumes, like spray of breakers,
play,
And burnished shafts and staves,

A Song of Faith

Like ripples, in the sun's fair light,
Arise and fall anon;
So came the streams, with might and
main,
Together rolling on.
And lo, as they together grew,
What wonders Peter saw!
The mighty army tugging hard,
A ship-shaped chariot draw!
'Twas fronted with a bull's dark head,
And on it, with his weight
Of triple crown and purple gown,
A monarch sat in state.
They now approached the mountain,
Where Peter, the Hermit, stood;
He saw their faces covered all,
With sweat and lassitude;
He heard and felt the breathing loud
Of lungs, in utmost strain,
As onward tugged the army hard,
And labored up the plain.
With ponderous weight the chariot
Now creaked and croaked along;
The ponderous wheels, in massive reels,
With massive iron strong,
Their own sounds hushed, while stones
they crushed,
The stones of fiery flint,
Which to the moving structure gave,
Of sparks, a blazing plinth.
Now, in their way laborious,
Lo, many a heart gave way,
And, in its course, exhausted stretched,
The helpless victim lay;

Book I—Canto the Third

The chariot wheels pass over him,
And merge his life with the sparks;
The man, upon the bull's head perched,
The lifeless body marks;
And speaks with three raised fingers he
A blessing for the dead;
And undismayed and undelayed,
The army tugs ahead.
And now there to the highway streamed,
In columns great and small,
From every land and every strand,
Which heard the Hermit's call,
Men, women and children, pale of face
Bespeaking their frantic zeal;
Themselves they cast, as on it passed,
Beneath the chariot's wheel.
Still onward rolled the chariot,
While blood overflowed its ruts;
And, as when laden builder's cart
Through mire stiffening cuts
And heaves and plows and piles it up,
So bodies heaped in piles,
And marked the chariot's bloody track
For many, many miles.
They now the border did approach
Of great Alexius' realm,
Who in the Eastern empire grand,
With power held the helm.
And there they meet a mighty host
Of that great potentate,
With threatening word and ready sword,
Their progress to debate.
He claimed, by old possession,
The land they came to invade,

A Song of Faith

Therefore, said he, their conquests
must

All to his crown be laid.

But there stepped forth a hero brave,

And said, with haughty air:

“Behold the mighty force we have,
Bethink you what you dare.”

The Hermit now confusion saw,

As would in all beseem

An army of rabid plunderers —

All this he saw, in his dream.

All earnest hearts disheartened were,

And wanton ones were in want

Of order strict, restricting them

From loud and imposing flaunt.

Such loads of care were tossed within

The dreaming Hermit's mind,

As by the rippling streamlet's brink,

In restless sleep, he reclined;

But now the zephyrs, stirring mild

The leaves to a calm surprise,

Approach and take the slumber's slake

From off the sleeper's eyes.

The Hermit rose from his repose,

To hasten on his way,

And saw with eye begrudgingly

The fast declining day.

He to the court of Bela came,

With festive candles bright,

Just when the stars first broke the bars

And curtains of the night.

The king a lover of banquets was,

Of women and of wine;

Book I—Canto the Third

And none whom he invited ever
A thought had, to decline;
So filled his halls and parlors were
With knights and ladies fair,
When Peter, the Hermit, saw from far
The blazing windows' glare.
The cooks, preparing for the feast,
The porters bearing the wine,
Domestics, bearing, in tramp unceased,
The garments costly and fine,
Of guests, disrobing and greeting there,
And seating themselves in place,
With mirth in every step and touch,
And smiles on every face,
While, with his hand, King Bela bland,
With tongue and every look,
Extended to all a welcome warm
Which all most freely took —
Made up a scene, as there described,
And scrolled, in letters rough,
High on the castle walls so grand,
The motto of "Enough."
Now Bela's air around him there
Had drawn the doting dames,
As willing their best to give in quest,
As to annex their names.
Now laughing groups were forming e'er,
In circles large and small;
Winged from the eye, the jokes now fly,
All fluttering through the hall;
Now in the jocund junketing,
Most precious bits and sips
Were ta'en in sweetness long drawn out,
By red-hot, longing lips;—

A Song of Faith

When Peter, the Hermit, entered there,
The man with sable beard,
For neither gay, nor strong, nor high
This man of sorrows feared.
Three steps from the door upon the floor
He took, then stood erect,
As if his mind's revolvings there
Had stopped him, to reflect.
He spake: "Ah! hear, ye Christians!
hear,
The sorrow I have to tell;
Myself was there and saw it all,
Now hear and mark it well.
In Palestina's holy land,
To Christian memories dear,
The land of Christian pilgrimage,
The pilgrims now must fear
For life and faith and freedom's breath;
The wicked Saracen's power
Holds all that's dear to Christians
there,
E'en now this very hour.
While here this castle sumptuous,
By thy rich bounty, O King!
Doth shine with light of candles bright,
And loud with merriment ring,
Out there is sighing and sad, sad
dying,
Where Saracens oppress
Our brethren with chains and bitter
pains,
And darkness and distress."
He paused awhile, with sad, sad smile;
His words were falling cold;

Book I—Canto the Third

The king's stern look seemed not to
brook

This interruption bold;
Albeit, the air of ladies fair
Seemed stirred with sympathy,
And tears, they deem, now must beseem,
He here and there might see.
His argument, with shrewd intent,
He turned, while yet they stared,
And, clothing in smiles his words, went
on :

"The Pope hath wisely declared,
An universal indulgence large,
For sins both past and to come,
To all who join this holy war;
So reads the Bull from Rome.
To this there shall yet added be
The promise of richest spoil,
To all who bear the holy Cross,
To free that holy soil."

King Bela now arose and spake,
As one who's suddenly caught,
In midst of bright diversion slight,
By some new power of thought:
"But tell us, holy pilgrim!

How far the cause has advanced?
What heroes are already Crossed,
And for the conflict lanced?"

Then Peter bravely answered him:

"All Europe is rising to pour,
In mighty waves of holy war,
To wash the shameful gore,
By Saracens spilt of Christian blood,
From Palestina's soil;

A Song of Faith

The mightiest names of Christendom
Are leaving their daily toil,
The Cross to take for Jesus' sake.
The Pope a council held,
With countless host, outdoing most
What Moses did of eld,
Beneath the sky's blue canopy;
And countless were the names
Who to these there yet added were,
Of older and later fames;
With men in crowds, exclaiming loud:
'It is the Almighty's will;
The Cross we'll take for Jesus' sake,
The holy army to fill.'"
With one accord, they all were
stirred
By Peter's stirring words;
With sighs they breathed, the knights
unsheathed
And waved their shining swords;
The ladies wave their kerchiefs brave,
Like butterflies o'er the rill,
Borne by the sweeping current on:
"It is the Almighty's will."
Then spake the king, delivering,
With moved, unsettled air:
"The cause is good and certainly
The enterprise looks fair;
One thing I see, at least, to me,
It is not in the clear;
The distance long to us alone,
Would make us fail, I fear.
Then tell us of the army's main,
And whence to move they intend,

Book I—Canto the Third

That we our force, with sword and horse,
With other's strength may blend."
Then Peter again made answer plain:
"The army's main I have shown,
But thee aright to guide in light,
I further can make known:
The friend of truth and of thy youth,
The royal Buda's lord,
E'en Ladislaus, of noble house,
Faithful in deed and word,
His resolution firm has formed,
To Holy Salem to go,
There with his knights in armor bright
The heathen to o'erthrow.
Already his men are gathering,
And all his crafts at work,
Together with pious ladies fair,
Within fair Buda's burgh,
All fitting for the holy war
New mails and weapons bright,
The Cross's glory to reflect,
In all victorious fight."

King Bela called now and dispatched
His trustiest herald, one
Hornbog, to whom the countries 'round
With all their courts were known;
To him he gave this message brave,
To bring to Buda's lord,
With many a friendly greeting,
And many a kindly word:
"Bring Buda's lord King Bela's
word,
The comrade friend of his youth,

A Song of Faith

That he his force, with sword and horse,
Is gathering for the truth,
For Jesus' sake, the Cross to take,
To go to the Holy Land,
And fight the heathen tryanny,
With faithful heart and hand.
And tell the lord of Buda fair,
That Bela would propose
That we our expeditions join
Against our common foes.
If he agree, so let him say,
And time and place assign;
King Bela will not wanting be,
Nor fair condition decline.
My trusty Hornbog! haste thee now,
And bring us answer aright,
E'er thrice the stars do break the bars
And curtains of the night."

Book I—Canto the Fourth

A FORTRESS high, with bastions
strong,
Stood on an escarped rock,
Upon the Danube's furrowed right,
In her embraceful lock;
'Twas Peterward, the sacred guard,
So called, from Apostle's name,
High standing long, with bastions strong
And many a triumph's fame.
So now the lord of Buda fair
Stood firm in daring desire,
Presaging future victories
Whose fame beforehand inspire;
And thither he appointed
His chosen warriors to come,
With horses fed, and burnished sword,
And farewell said at home.
The same Hornbog, the herald, had
To Bela to announce;
They'd join their force of sword and
horse,
At Peterward, at once.
Then soon he hastened to the house
Of his old friend Kanute,
Where waited Christiana fair,
In sorrow and grief acute;
For long, to see him, she had longed,
And trembled that he might come;

A Song of Faith

And yet as such she dreaded much
The harbinger of her doom—
The bitter smart, so soon to part
To war so far away;
And waves of grief gave no relief,
Nor did the sorrow allay,
But sad, sad words, in sad accords,
Arose from the waves, like spray:
“Be still, be still, my aching heart,”
She said in accent sweet—
“Be still, be still, my breaking heart,
Woe shall not bliss defeat.”

At this the lord of Buda fair
Appeared at her open door,
And walking with a tender step,
Like one on a mission sore,
Repeated her song, with accent strong:
“Woe shall not bliss defeat”;
And said: “Our love is from Above,
In it again we’ll meet.”
He came to the side of his fair bride,
In tenderness of love;
And from the smart, so soon to
part,
His heart began to move,
So that he took a seat with look
Of overwhelming caress,
Which from between them chased away
The shadows of distress;
As when the sun his potent beams
O’er storm-tossed lake out-pours
And drives the shadows lingering
Away from the quiet shores.

Book I—Canto the Fourth

Fair Christiana, comforted,
Now found her words to speak:
"O, Ladislaus! thou art so strong,
While I am frail and weak;
I trembled for thy coming here,
How ever I could bear
The bitter smart, so soon to part,
And for thy going prepare;
But now that thou art here, I vow,
My heart feels only joy,
In thy love's light and sunshine bright,
Which no cloud can annoy."

Said he: "Such joy shall be for aye!
Our hopes are fixed Above,
And from Him now rich streams flow
down,
In whom we live and love;
So shall our lives more happy grow,
Our love a blessing be,
And all our joys from Fountain flow,
Which flows eternally."
They lingered, in expression calm,
Of inexpressible thought,
And drank the stream which flowed
therefrom,
With hopes and memories fraught.

Then Ladislaus looked at his Cross,
And for his armor inquired,
Which Christiana anxiously,
To furnish had desired.
She brought it from her chamber then,
And placed it on a chair;

A Song of Faith

The sword she in her hand upheld,
As fair, as the lily fair,
And said: "This sword has history,
And name of great renown,
As borne of old, by heroes bold,
Whom mighty deeds do crown;
Here's father can tell the story well,
As oft he has told it me;"
To which Kanute, with glad salute,
Assented presently:
"It is the good sword Balmung
Of Sigfrid, Siglind's son;
He it, from the Nibelungen,
With deeds of glory won.
With it he to the high court went
Of Gunther on the Rhine,
And won the heart of sister queen,
Crimhild, both fair and fine.
With it he to the Island went,
For royal Gunther to win
The mighty, manly Brunhild,
Who came with ambition keen.
Of Crimhild envious she did stir
The envy in Hagen's breast,
Who sought the opportunity,
To do her bloody behest.
By flattery he discovered,
From Crimhild unaware,
The only spot in Sigfrid
To deadly weapon bare.
Then, then, grown thirsty, in the chase,
Fair Siglind's tender son
To rippling brook, in forest-grove,
With eagerness bent down;

Book I—Canto the Fourth

It was the hand of Hagen,
Who, with perfidious stroke,
Two tender hearts and one strong one,
In Sigfrid's death there broke.
Fair Crimhild knew it and turned pale,
Fair Siglind knew it and died,
For Hagen looking on the corpse,
Fresh bled the wound in its side.
But Hagen took this Balmung then,
And bore it in reckless rage,
To blot the stain from off his name,
His heart's pang to assuage.
It happened then that the fair spouse
Of good King Etzel had died;
Of noblest blood fair Heleké,
Her country's joy and pride;
Her spirit in thy bosom beats,
In generation the third,
For Etzel's son and Heleké's
Was father to Adelbert.
King Etzel heard of Crimhild,
The widow queenly and fair,
And to her sent an embassy,
His love for her to declare.
Fair Crimhild heard with pleasure,
The offer of wealth and power;
For thoughts of bloody dark revenge
Arose in her mind that hour.
She came and the throne ascended,
Queen Heleké had graced,
And grew more fair and joyful,
At Etzel's side well placed.
Then she invited, in her joy,
With Hagen, her royal kin,

A Song of Faith

To come and see her happiness,
Her sting she hid within;
In secret she instruction gave
To every loyal brave,
With slaughter on the guests to fall,
And not a soul to save.
Ah! then the good sword Balmung was
There bathed in heroes' blood;
Fair Crimhild's heroes fell, alas!
So brave, in a cause not good;
For Hagen mowed them down in rows,
As storm with white-edged hail,
Mows down the father's joy and hope,
And makes the mother wail.
He all of Rudiger's heroes slew;
And wounded him to death;
And Hildebrand exhausted fled,
Bereft of men and breath.
But Hagen, too, and Gunther now
Were of their men bereft,
All fallen in blood, in cause not good,
And they alone were left.
Now for the envy of a queen
Two kings were sore distressed,
All for a crime, though past in time,
It yet must be redressed.
King Etzel moaned, but Crimhild pale,
With tears to Ditrich went,
Whose locks and beard of fire unsheared,
With coolest steel were blent.
His loyal will she did persuade,
To her will to give way,
And with the two of weary thew
Take up the bloody fray.

Book I—Canto the Fourth

At first he closed with Hagen,
And felt his weary strength,
And Balmung's weight; though now too
late

He swung its drooping length.
For Ditrich fresh on Hagen worn
Inflicts a bleeding wound;
With Balmung's brand still in his hand,
This mighty hero was bound.
So Gunther, too, who freely threw
Away his bloody blade;
And both were led unto the queen
And fettered prisoners made.
Her brother she beheaded first,
And carried, with her hand,
The bloody trophy to her foe,
His terror to command.

From heart so coarse, with voice so
hoarse,

The fire flashed from her eye,
She shrieked: 'Return what thou hast
taken,

Or by my hand thou die!'
She with a grip of passion seized
The sword of Siglind's son,
The sword which spotless Sigfrid,
In spotless glory, had won;
She swung its length, with anger's
strength,

In widely flashing ire,
And Hagen's headless trunk lay there,
In silent convulsions dire.

Appalled the good King Etzel stood,
And Ditrich and Hildebrand,

A Song of Faith

To see a hero of such fame
Slain by a woman's hand;
And noble Ditrich then spake forth:
‘By my life, it shall boot her naught’;
He grasped the blood-warm Balmung's
brand,
And slew her on the spot.
From this, my great-grandsire's estate,
This sword has come down to me,
And now, my lord of Buda,
I bequeath it unto thee,
To wield it, in a nobler cause,
This steel of justice sealed,
Since God, in love and mercy, hath
Those unjust wounds all healed.”

Then Ladislaus fair answer made:
“A noble gift, indeed,
And trusty blade it is, forsooth,
And true to its metal's meed;
For steel the great avenger is
Of Heaven-crying wrong,
And surely my noble Balmung
In this has been most strong.”
He spake and took the burnished gift
From Christiana's hand,
Who trembled now, to see him go,
To war in the Holy Land.
For Lothar had came and Lythke,
Each with his warriors ten,
On sable steed all mounted well,
To horseman's nicest ken,
To escort the lord of Buda fair
To fortress Peterward,

Book I—Canto the Fourth

Where, on the Danube's furrowed right,
Now many a lance and sword,
In sun-lit air, high glistened fair,
And many a hero's heart
Shook off the sighs and lingering ties,
In eagerness to depart.
'Twas then the lord of Buda laid
The burnished Balmung aside,
A farewell final, long and sad
To take from his tender bride.
The words were few but fervent, too,
He spake to old Kanute,
Whose heart beneath the double stress,
Full true to his old repute,
Dismissed the lord of Buda fair,
With words of courage and cheer,
And only for his daughter dear
Suppressed a silent tear.
But she, with eyes all streaming,
Extended to him her hands,
While through the tearful shower
The rainbow of love expands,
'Neath which he stood, in raptured mood,
And stricken to the heart;
He felt with her the smart severe,
How hard it was to part.
He her unto his bosom pressed,
While she hung on his neck,
And slow the words with broken chords,
She finally thus spake:
"Oh! thou art going, going away!
Could I but go with thee!
Oh! must thou go, canst thou not stay—
Canst thou not stay with me?"

A Song of Faith

"Think not of that, my tender bride!"

He full of tenderness said;

"'Tis fairest duty calling me,

Its call must be obeyed.

And there thine age'd father is,

In need of thy loving care,

So, for each other, duty's call

Fulfilling shall be our pray'r."

He spake and took his armor bright,

All burnished by tender hands,

And donning it to chastely fit

He buckled the shining bands;

And on his head the helmet did

High wave its lofty plume,

As with a low expressive bow,

He left the bridal room.

Book I—Canto the Fifth

THE dew aground was falling down
From wings of the winds of night,
And in the Danube, flowing clear,
The stars reflected bright,
When Ladislaus, with heavy Cross,
From dusty raid and hard,
Approached the gates inviting him,
Ascending to Peterward.

The heroes there each other greet,
All filled with love's strong zeal
Which caused them, in the Cross they
bore,
The union's bonds to feel;
Their words and eyes, in glad surprise,
And hands expressed their hearts,
As love's strong zeal both fair good will
And cheer to men imparts.
How, from one heart to other's heart
The strength of purpose flows!
How, in the form of greeting warm,
The zeal of the soul then glows!
The castle halls were lighted all,
And rang with friendly cheer;
All weariness forgotten was,
And parting's smart severe,
In tying new bands with friendship's
hands,
In conversation sweet,

A Song of Faith

While high in breasts, with waving
 crests,

The tides of valor beat;
Till Ladislaus, on whose fair face,
 The care of sincerity lay,
Whose zeal no intermission knew,
 But turned the night to day,
Admonished all to take their rest;
 The night was now far spent,
Already it by morn compressed,
 By streaks of dawn was rent.
A lulling calm flowed from his words,
 As when the thunder, on high,
Doth lull the bluster of the wind,
 The storm now passing by:
You hear a stirring whisper yet,
 From dripping leaves of trees
Which yield the fullness of their

 joy
 To calmly quieting breeze.
And slumber on their eyelids lit,
 As lights the dew on the grass,
While through the deeps of mind, in
 sleep,
 In dreams, the thought-waves pass,
As waves of hidden powers pass,
 With loud inaudible roar,
E'er through the deep recesses dark
 Of Night's plutonian shore.

The cock his family rouses first,
 To seek their early prey,
But Ladislaus was earlier;
 Before the approach of day,

Book I—Canto the Fifth

He cleared the way, without delay,
To make an early start,
That sleeping sound sloth might be
found,
When quick they would depart.
They brake their fast, and mounted
Their fed and well-groomed steeds,
Equipped and brightly armored all,
With heart for noble deeds;
The inspiration of their cause,
To free the Holy Land,
Did bear them on, on pinions strong,
As eagles do expand,
When, high at rest, on mountain's crest,
They look far, far away,
And from their eyrie longing spy
The long desired prey.

They to a rushing river came,
Which flowed, with broad expanse;
The ferryman there ready stood,
Well armed with oar and lance,
Hornbog to him said hastily:
"Now if thou Christian be,
In Christ believe, the Cross receive,
That we thy faith may see!"
"My Christian duty well I know,
And have no need to be told,
I'm faithful to my trust and true,"
Quoth back the oarsman bold.
"Why not to shore then long before,
To carry us over the stream?
We have not made four nights our raid,
To wait thy lazy dream."

A Song of Faith

“You’ll then abide my service tried,
Which first belongs to my lord,
That I no one shall ferry over,
Without his faithful word,
To keep the law in holy awe,
Within my master’s domain:
So, till I to your masters speak,
Ye well can here remain.”
“Until thou to our masters speak,
We shall be over the stream;”
So spake Hornbog, in angry haste,
And grasped his lance’s beam.
“There now take that, as answer pat,
It is to the point and true;”
And with a thrust in haste unjust,
He pierced the oarsman through.
Then in the barge with bottom large,
He put his men to the oars,
And soon the boat was far afloat,
Betwixt the fatal shores.
He emptied it and sent it back,
With ferryman of his own,
A man from the vine-clad river Rhine,
The jolly oarsman, Rhone,
To bring across fair Ladislaus,
And Bela, who now were near,
With all the force of sword and horse,
Who’d formed the wakeful rear.
When these mid-stream were wide afloat,
Fair Ladislaus looked out,
And saw a force of sword and horse
Bear down, with hostile shout,
From castle high on hill near by,
To where Hornbog, with the van,

Book I—Canto the Fifth

All waiting stood, in reinless mood,
And gossiping man with man.
Then Buda's lord flashed with his
sword:

"To horse, brave knights! to horse;
Look, look, the storm there lowering
comes!

Look, look, it comes with force!"
Now standing on impatient sole,
Said Ladislaus to Rhone:

"Now haste, my jolly ferryman,
Nor shalt thou row alone;"
And seized, with zeal and friendly will,
The wearily creaking oar,
So that, with speed of thought and deed,
The boat soon shot ashore.

Meanwhile Hornbog with mounted
force

Had stood the hostile assault;
But from the fray, one bleeding lay,
By Hornbog's fatal fault.

It was the noble Gunther,
Lord Bela's favorite knight;
He had unhorsed three foemen,
Who'd met him, in the fight,
But from behind a fourth had thrust,
And pierced him through with his
lance,

And down he had fallen to the ground,
Bewailing his evil chance.

Lord Bela, when he saw it, plunged,
Like burning torch of fire,
And thundering in the burning flame,
And flashing forth his ire,

A Song of Faith

Upon the force of hostile horse
Of bold, redoubtable foe,
Who charged with steady weapon sharp,
And answered blow with blow.
But to the lord of Buda now
The dying warrior said:
"It is but toll to the oarsman's soul,
I with my blood have paid."
When Buda's lord had heard this word
Of dying hero's remorse,
The pang he feels, as now his reels
Do prick his damask horse,
And, eager from the Cross to wipe,
This blot of bloody bane,
Ere still more blood, by Christian sword,
His virgin pathway stain,
He to the combat cried aloud,
To cease their bloody fray;
"Truce! Truce!" he cried, "Let peace
betide
Us on our onward way!"
Then with the knights from castle
heights,
The terms of treaty were made.
"One word in truth but given forsooth,
Had been sufficient," they said;
"But now we see an enemy
Who's shown, he means no sport;
So, we forthwith must lead you all
To our Alexius' court;
But Hornbog, at the castle we,
In person, must report."
Fair Buda's lord bethought himself,
How to avoid delay

Book I—Canto the Fifth

And loss of force to Crusade's cause,
Thus hindered on its way;
Then laid the plan, with humble mind,
That Bela, with humbled knights,
Go to the great Alexius' court,
And plead their Christian rights,
While at his castle, with Hornbog,
Himself would plead their cause,
That speedy mercy they might find,
For progress of the Cross.
So, humbled, yet in hope, they part,
To meet full soon again,
Not dreaming of the conflicts sore,
And intervening pain,
Ere then their heart would sadly
smart,
And prove, with trials sore,
E'en unto death their plighted faith
Which in the Cross they bore.
Fair Ladislaus, with Hornbog, went
To the baron's castle fort,
And Bela, with the rest, away
To great Alexius' court.

Sternly the baron them received,
With dark and threatening frown,
And said: "Ye bear the red-Cross sign,
And strike a Christian down!"
Said Ladislaus, with humbled Cross:
"A rash and murderous deed
It is, alas! we must confess;
Nor have we aught to plead,
But sorrow's breath and Gunther's death,
Lest haste might us excuse;

A Song of Faith

For haste, you know, makes violent,
When we should calmness use.
Thy love we task and mercy ask,
O, baron! for Jesus' sake,
That we, in service of the Cross,
Our onward course may take."
While Ladislaus was speaking thus,
The baron eyed him well;
The sparkles flew, as interest grew,
And in him seemed to swell,
As when fond recollections old
Begin to wake, in the mind,
And roll out sparkling fold on fold
Of thought, yet undefined.
He nothing said, but them dismissed,
His final word to wait,
Hornbog in close arrestment held,
And Buda's lord, in state.

Thus waiting, wore the weary time
The mind of Buda's lord;
He looked upon his red-Cross sign,
His shield and on his sword,
Upon his good sword Balmung,
And thought of the lily hand
Which it, at home, had given to
him,
Upon the Danube's strand.
Then forth repaired, in evening air,
And strolled from castle walls;
Too narrow its apartments were,
Too low its irksome halls;
The heavens he must o'er him see,
Now higher, since the sun

Book I—Canto the Fifth

No longer on their zenith hung
And pulled their canopy down.
Whilst Ladislaus, with humbled Cross,
Thus drank the moody air,
He heard a crash, and water splash,
With cry of wild despair.
Stricken with awe, he looked and saw,
On fatal stream near by,
A circle growing, from center showing
An empty boat awry.
Quick thoughts now flashed and languor
dashed,
From heart, and armor, aside;
He o'er the grassy hillock leaped,
And plunged into the tide.
Far out into the current
He swam with brawny arm,
Where, in the high reverted sky,
He spied a fleeting form,
With locks afloat and spanged with stars,
As if, from the Milky Way,
Astræa herself were sinking there,
Down, down, were sinking, astray.
He braved the deep, with downward
sweep,
And bore her high and dry,
Upon the grassy hillocks green,
Beneath the star-decked sky—
The tender form of maiden fair,
The tender wave-whipped form,
With every limb developing
Its own peculiar charm.
And there he knelt beside her
And drank the pleasure it gave,

A Song of Faith

That God him, him did worthy deem,
Such charms from the wave to save.
It was the baron's daughter,
And Helen was her name;
The blood of Greeks rose to her cheeks,
Distinctioning her frame.
Her eyes, too, showed, in opening,
The ox-eyed Helen there;
The high-crowned brows, with lashes
low,
Set off a countenance fair;
Like landscape fair, in morning air,
With curving slopes and lakes,
On which, with light and flashes bright,
The rising sun now breaks.
Fair Ladislaus enraptured was
And carried far away
To distant dream-land of his youth,
To scenes of another day,
When by those lakes, with happy breaks,
He'd strolled those eye-lit curves,
Which then his soul to music sweet,
To tension, had set his nerves.
But, as when in the land of dreams,
The sounds of life invade,
They frighten fancies from the day,
As sunlight doth the shade;
So startled was fair Ladislaus
Out of his pleasant dream;
For Helen addressed him by his
name,
And greatly puzzled him.
"O, Ladislaus!" sighed Helen,
"What god hath led thy way,

Book I—Canto the Fifth

'To save my life from drowning?
May he now bless this day!
Knowest not whom thou hast rescued,
Whose life hung on thine arm,
As from the waves thou borest me,
From death's o'erwhelming harm?
Knowest not thy schoolmate, Helen,
Who in Odessa's halls,
And streets, and parks, in playful
larks,
Oft heard thy youthful calls?"
"Ah! well a-day," he now did say,
"And, marry, I should know,
Who called me back, from my high
track,
To scenes of long-ago!
And 'twas the Lord of mighty word,
With all things in His hands,
Who, leading me, my service calls,
With sword, to foreign lands,
Hath led me hither, this fair day,
To save a life so dear;—
But how thou hast come hither,
To me is not yet clear."
But now a lamentation loud
Was heard upon the hill;
The baron had his daughter missed,
The central star of his will,
And turned all eyes to searching,
Himself went calling forth:
"My Helen, O, my Helen!
My only treasure on earth!"
And to her feet fair Helen leaped,
And up the hillock sprang,

A Song of Faith

And, in his heart to ease the smart,
Her clarion voice outrang.
Then turned to Ladislaus, she said:
“Come ’long, thou knight so brave,
For glad he’ll be, thee, too, to see,
Who didst his daughter save.”
So, both the hill ascended near,
To meet the baron’s face,
Who greets with joy, his daughter dear,
The knight, with comely grace;
But Helen, then, with ardent words,
Made known the knightly deed,
That on the lord her father should
Bestow some worthy meed;
“The more,” said she, “since erstwhile
he
Our guest was, in our house;
It is the lord of Buda fair,
The princely Ladislaus.”
The baron said: “I know, I know,”
And blessed the day, he came,
The more, since with such generous
deed,
So worthy of his great name,
He’d done an act so great, in fact,
He knew not how to reward
A knight so dear and now so near,
So great of heart and sword.
Fair Buda’s lord made answer fair:
“I’ve done my duty, no more;
And Duty aims at no high claims,
But pleased is she to score
With deeds of light her annals bright,
Joy giving to hearts of men,

Book I—Canto the Fifth

And drinks the stream which flows there-
from,
To follow her course again.
O, worthy baron, let me drink
Thy pardon, from thy joy,
That, in her blessed course refreshed
Fair Duty in her employ,
May onward go to Holy Land,
The land of Christian love,
Her annals bright, with deeds of light,
With knightly deeds to score.”
“ So may it be,” the baron said,
“ But let’s indoors repair;
How glad, my Helen, I shall be,
Again to see thee there,
And Ladislaus, beneath the Cross,
This noble prince and lord!
How sweet, old friendships to renew,
In reminiscent word!”
Together they regaled themselves,
With light and warmth and wine,
And with the hall’s luxuriance,
On which they did recline.
And Helen soon new light did
bring,
New-clad, in evening dress,
Which she, in her exulting joy,
With nicest carelessness,
In perfect taste, had donned, in haste,
With loosely flowing folds,
Her holding, as the opening bud
The blowing flower holds.
Her well-curved brows a luster wore,
As often, after rain,

A Song of Faith

You see on clouds with fleecy curves,
When Sol shines forth amain.
Her eyes, they were this glory's throne,
Whose orbs of perfect light,
Just out from under sorrow's cloud,
Beamed forth, with joy more bright.
On Buda's lord all this, with word
And grateful look she poured;
Nor was it all the riches rare,
She, in her heart, kept stored.
There rushed an overflowing
stream,
Of gratitude and love,
Which she to govern sought in vain,
As both for utterance strove,
In words more ardent than beseeemed;
So, still again, and again
She thanked, and thanked, and thanked
him,
Yet deemed her thanks too plain.
And, when the baron weary grown,
At last, retired to rest,
The streams of youth together flowed
And for expression pressed;
They bore the pattering flippancy
Of youthful merriment,
Most heartily, with repartee
And present emotions, blent.
As when, at some broad river's mouth,
You stand and hear the bells
Of ruminating herds abrowse
On banks, up in the dells
Of tributary streamlets;
The noises sweetly blend

Book I—Canto the Fifth

With those of waters passing by,
As into them they bend:
So into waters passing by,
Ajoy with bells of youth,
They poured their hearts commingling,
Now more, and more, in truth,
The gratitude of Helen fair,
In tones and glances flushed,
Broke forth more ardent than beseemed,
For which she as often blushed.
“Yes, Ladislaus!” she gushing said:
“Thou’st doubly saved my life,
Since, in thy presence now I live;
Before, it was only strife;
From day to day, I pined away,
In loneliness forlorn;
As lonely I was sinking down,
When by thee I was borne
Into this haven of joy profound;
My life is anchored now
In comfort of thy company;
How can I thank thee, how?”
She of their youthful pastimes spake,
How happy they were then;
Such joy he had restored to her,
For which she thanked him again.
She of their youthful duties spake,
How happy they were then;
Such joy he had restored to her,
For which she thanked him again.
She of their youthful studies spake,
How happy they were then;
Such joy he had restored to her,
For which she thanked him again.

A Song of Faith

She of their youthful troubles spake,
How happy they were then;
Such joy he had restored to her,
For which she thanked him again.
She in her hand an album held,
Of Homer's Iliad,
With pictures of the heroes all,
In knightly armor clad;
To this she his attention drew
And him to her more nigh,
And said: "Oh! how this doth remind
Of happy days gone by!"
Together they the album leafed,
And, in the cuts, they saw
The stream of song there flow along,
In most inspiring awe:
The heroes of those youthful times,
Presented in the book,
In scenes did walk, they seemed to
talk,
And feathered crests most shook.
"Oh! grand old days of the gods!" she
said,
Assuming a look sincere;
Heroes and lovers song then made,
And Venus, the goddess dear
E'er took the part of loving heart,
And gave enjoyment sweet,
As Paris to love's chamber fair,
She bore from conflict's heat.
"Such joy, such joy is mine again,
And we are happy now;
I'll ne'er again feel lonely pain,
How can I thank thee, how?"

Book I—Canto the Fifth

Now felt the lord of Buda fair
The flickering flame of youth;
But soon his heart suppressed it there,
And gave him the blush of ruth.
He said: "O, Helen, much too much
Obliged, for what I've done,
Thyself, indeed, thou deemest,
God, God is only One,
Most holy, just and merciful,
And robed in majesty—
The Father, Son and Holy Ghost—
The Holy One in Three;
To Him all praise and glory be,
He being the highest good,
And walking in His faith and love,
We have beatitude."
In awe fair Helen listened there,
But understood him not;
Her mind was simple, as its sin,
And dark without a spot.
Intense were her emotions,
And passionate was her love,
Which she would of a nature deem,
That God himself must approve.
Quoth she: "Oh! cease thy preaching,
So awfully sublime,
Of majesty o'erruling
Us little beings of time!
Let's pluck the flowers, Venus fair
Hath strewn in our way,
And trust to love's own power there,
To guide our future day!
Oh! heavenly abandon,
At anchor thus to rock,

A Song of Faith

In harbor fair with love's bright air,
Not fearing a mortal shock!
Or if a wind should bluster in,
And carry us out to sea,
'Tis love that will the canvas fill,
And we'll together be;
And finally some island fair,
Of everlasting bowers,
Together will receive us there,
To rapturous honeyed hours!"

These words her with expression
winged,
A cherub ready to fly,
And, with affection infectingly,
She looked into his eye.
And Buda's lord again did feel
The flickering flame of youth;
But soon his heart suppressed it there,
And gave him the blush of ruth.
He said: "This hour, Helen fair,
Is sweet and joyous, indeed,
But all the more it fleeting is,
Time flies with lightning speed;
And so my time of parting comes,
My Master calls me away;
And when He calls, I follow Him,
I can not longer stay."

When she had heard this candid
word,
Though spoken, in accents mild,
A pallor o'er her countenance flew,
And shadows, chasing wild,
Passed o'er her brow, in tremors sad,
As clouds pass over the moon,

Book I—Canto the Fifth

And cause the pallid landscapes
 Away from the sight to swoon.
So Helen the apartment left,
 And Buda's lord was alone;
Upon his soul the shadow was,
 Whose cause he could not own.
Next morning again the baron did
 His noble guest receive,
Who of his word reminded him,
 Hornbog from dure to relieve,
That they might onward, onward go,
 To join their eager band,
Upon their raid, all hasting on,
 To war in the Holy land.

Book I—Canto the Sixth

THE welkin frowned, with rolling
sound;

Two storm-clouds met at bay,
And columns loud of seething cloud
Darkened the face of day.

So, in the breast of Buda's lord,
A storm was raging, as well;
Against his purpose came, like clouds,
Emotions, he could not quell.

His breast he to the thunder bares,
His brow, to the beating rain;
His purpose thus, in humbleness,
Was winged with the storm again.

So, onward in the storm he rode,
Not heeding the lightning flash;
And onward with the storm he rode,
Not heeding the double dash

Of adverse feelings, in his breast,
And adverse blasts, without;

Now up, now down, he onward rode,
The hosts of darkness shout,

But on he pressed, with humbled crest,
Through night and thunder and hail;
His purpose, tried in storm and tide,
Did over all prevail.

Emerging from the night of storm,
He stood on the rocky cliffs,

Book I—Canto the Sixth

Which over into Asia look,
Just when the sun his whiffs
Of morning air, to cheer him sent,
And beckon him on his way;
And eagerly he looked to see
The promising face of day.
Hornbog stood there beside him,
All wet and weary and worn,
Like one whose heart partook no part
In what him on had borne.
Then Ladislaus did break the pause,
And thus to Hornbog spake:
“Behold the sun, the rising sun!
The armies he’s called to wake
Are far ahead, far, far, ahead,
To war in the Holy Land,
And now he onward beckons us,
To join their devoted band.
Down there’s the court of Alexius,
Our comrades there we’ll meet,
Then on again, without delay,
Our constant path we’ll beat.”
Alas! the lord of Buda fair
Here sore disappointment met;
King Bela into waywardness
Had gone, to his regret.
For Baldwin’s name and conquests’ fame
Were spreading far and wide,
How he was kingdoms conquering,
And growing in wealth and pride.
To join him, Bela, with many more,
By hope of plunder seduced,
Had gone away; and sad to say,
The few who had refused,

A Song of Faith

Were living in disorder wild,
From knightly orders loosed.
When this he saw, his heart was sad,
And spake fair Ladislaus:
“O, Christ! where are thy followers,
Beneath Thy holy Cross?
Where are thy holy warriors
To fight thy holy cause?
Alas! alas! it's come to pass,
They're following after fame,
And in unholy revelings
They desecrate Thy name!”
And slowly then, and one by one,
The knights confusedly came,
With looks that did their guilt
bespeak,
And for it rueful shame;
Then at his word themselves bestirred,
As when a bracing breeze
Doth gently raise the storm-bent maize,
And shake the drooping trees.
Lothar and Lythke greeting him,
First pressed the hand of the king,
And made report, in Bela's stead,
That now was everything
At court and camp in readiness,
At any time, to depart;
Then all with greetings came around,
Which went from heart to heart.

While they were thus, in happiness,
Renewed in heart and mind,
A courtly herald greeted them,
Who thus his message defined:

Book I—Canto the Sixth

“Alexias, the imperial queen,
The beautiful, learned and mild,
The knights of the Cross, of noble house,
Of courage, undefiled,
Inviteth, with fair Buda's lord,
This evening, four days hence,
To come to her fair castle-hall;
There she, with large expense,
In banquet, concert and in ball,
With ladies of the court,
Would them receive and entertain,
They surely must wait the sport.”
Around the quand'ry then did go,
And solving itself, when asked;
But whether to accept, or no,
Fair Buda's lord was tasked.
The queenly grace decision gave;
The knights the castle sought,
Bedight with mold and glory old,
But new, in every spot.
The balcony long and wide did show
Rich tiers of brilliant light,
And festooned were the entries all,
With radiant splendor bright.
They through a grove of pillars passed,
All laden with leaves and flowers,
As if all climes their foliage
Had yielded from their bowers;
And on the lucid marble-slabs,
Embossed with ancient frieze
From all the zones, the animals
Esport 'mong ferns and trees.
Up easy winding steps they go,
And enter the festive hall,

A Song of Faith

Where, with fair grace, Alexias
Queenly receives them all.
And richly was the banquet spread;
The harper struck his harp;
A cup of overflowing wine
Their appetites made sharp
They ate, and to the music drank,
By tender waiters urged,
While, in the distance, on the stage,
The sweet-lipped players surged,
Like white-winged, lucid cupids,
On downy hillocks of cloud.
As down they glided, to the front,
With nimble grace they bowed,
And gave an operatic piece
Of action, song and speech,
All by the queen adapted well,
To entertain and teach.
They sang of hearts all tender,
Of lonely weeping brides,
For absent lovers sighing,
Now riding the stormy tides;
And groves and parks and castles,
Of many a quiet home,
Upon the scene are pictured,
In which the lovelorn roam.
They sang of fair, fain maidens,
Impatient of lonely love,
Their quiet homes deserting,
In distant search, to rove,
In foreign lands, for absent loves,
On streams and stormy seas,
Their aimless course pursuing;
And, changed, the scene agrees:

Book I—Canto the Sixth

In far-perspective vista
Of stream, far, far away,
Is seen a lonely bark to break
Away from the break of day;
In it a lonely maiden sits,
As wistful as the morn,
When clouds are broken over it;
'Twixt rolling banks she's borne;
Her hands are on her bosom pressed,
And over the stern her eyes
Are vaguely raised, as looking for
Some object, in the skies.
She sings, in accents passionate:
"Away, to my love, away;
And if the wind do bluster in,
'Tis love will guide our day;
And if the wind do bluster in,
And carry us out to sea,
'Tis love that will the canvas fill,
And we'll together be;
And finally some island fair,
Of everlasting bowers,
Together will receive us there,
To rapturous, honeyed hours."

At this was startled Ladislaus,
As from an exquisite dream,
In which things which he had desired,
In present fulfillment seem.
Back, back the dream had carried him,
To youth's bright balmy morn,
When, like winged seeds, his feelings
were,
Upon the breezes borne.

A Song of Faith

But now his mind, by love inclined,
Which hath its source on high,
Repelled such dreams and fancies
vain;

They durst not now come nigh.
He clearly in himself revolved:
"How suits this place us now?
We are soldiers of a holy war,
Then how can we here bow
To sweet-lipped Pleasure's goddesses,
And, on Diana's field,
Instead of wheat, the wild oats reap,
The seeds of youth now yield?"
And straight the bugle he let blow,
Resounding through the hall,
And called the knights away, at once,
Away, before the ball
Had given to hearts, with longing smarts,
Occasion to meet and beat
Responsive to the music sweet,
With sensible hands and feet.

They left the hall and festive ball,
And many a maiden's sigh,
And voice was heard, in wailing word:
"Good-bye, Ladislaus, good-bye."
But no; around he never turned,
Albeit, the voice he knew,
But onward pressed, with honest haste,
And into the saddle threw
Himself; his knights all following,
Away he rode, in the night;
From castle bright, in shades of night,
Away he dived out of sight.

Book I—Canto the Sixth

The breathing was impetuous,
And tramping of the steeds,
Upon the sparkling stones of flint,
And on the crackling reeds;
Nor was there time for word between
The nearest neighbors to pass;
They held their course, with onward
force,
As firm and constant as,
When Nor'west wind the canvas fills
Of vessel eastward bound;
It sweeps o'er brays and breakers loud,
And leaves in its wake the sound.
Now, in their way before them, they
An army of pilgrims meet,
In humble track returning back,
In weary and slow retreat;
They were not few, a motley crew
Of princes, with moving courts,
Of knights, with soldiers straggling,
With bundles of all sorts,
Of priests and monks and bishops,
And nuns, with holy beads,
On wounded feet, some traveling,
Some riding weary steeds.
When Ladislaus, with eager eye,
There saw this cavalcade
Of humbled knights and broken steeds,
Thus bound on homeward raid,
Surprised was he and all his men,
And mightily taken back,
And soon their horse, from foaming
course,
To slower pace they slack.

A Song of Faith

But, when the Norman Robert,
And William of the Adze,
And even the Hermit, Peter,
All mounted on slow-paced pads,
Were seen, the lord of Buda fair
Then stopped abruptly short,
So that the horses started were,
Their sudden relief to snort.
Quoth he: "O, soldiers of the
Cross

Which way are your faces turned?
How stands, how stands the holy cause,
For which ye erstwhile burned?
How fares to-day fair Salem, say!
The Crescent, is it broke,
Are Christian shrines and Christian
hearts

Released from heathen yoke?"
To which the Norman Robert said:

"It is a bootless cause;
Too mighty is the enemy
Against the wavering Cross;
At Antioch our army, too,
Is threatened by the waves;
The wiser part he chooses, who
Himself betimes yet saves."
And of the Adze he added yet:
"My arm is strong to wield
The scathing blade, in open glade,
On honest battlefield;
But wading through the waters, too,
Beneath a towered wall,
Can bring no gain, nor honor win;
It's all for nothing, all."

Book I—Canto the Sixth

And Peter then, the Hermit, spake:
“Of course, the cause is good,
And we should fight it, certainly,
We should, if we only could;
But many are deserting it,
The holy army is small;
They never can the waters wade
To Antioch's towered wall;
They altogether unworthy are
The crusade's holy cause;
Christ's holy name they bring to
shame,
And break his holy laws.”
Sad, sad the lord of Buda was,
And moved almost to tears;
A heavy smart filled all his heart,
Corroding doubts and fears
His iron purpose lamed with rust,
And maimed his strength and
speech,
That even words, to vent his grief,
To him were out of reach.
Around, he lingered languidly,—
Where they stopped for the night,
With tents and princely covered halls,
And campfires burning bright.
The ladies fair all laden were
With jewels from the East;
And silks and silver services
Bedecked the evening feast,
Which sparkled soon, beneath the moon,
With gayest merriment,
And Peter's smile did all the while,
With all seem well content.

A Song of Faith

But Ladislaus, with humbled Cross,
Kept from these scenes aloof
And looked upon the revelry,
With sad and silent reproof.
Away he wandered, all alone,
Among the shadowy trees,
From festal lights; he felt he must
Enjoy the cool night breeze.
He hardly knew what moved him,
though
He felt the evil power;
But evil overwhelming so,
It made his purpose cower,
Away his strength was oozing cold,
Like streams into a swamp,
O'er which vampires their orgies hold,
In darkness cold and damp.
Just then across his vision bleared,
In campfires' broken light,
He saw a flitting maiden form,
In shadows of the night.
And, wonder! as it clearer grew,
As from the clouds of the past,
He to his sight emerging saw
The face of Helen, at last;
It still the look so wistful had,
It had, when he rode away,
As in the hall, before the ball,
It sighed for love's fair day.

But now he heard a bugle call
Send forth a thrilling sound;
It chased the fairy fancies all
From all the region 'round;

Book I—Canto the Sixth

And Buda's lord looked at his sword,
And walked to the trysting ground.
A messenger was speaking there,
Just from the war in the East,
Sent to regain the knights so vain,
Now reveling in the feast.
But no; their hearts were hardened,
Upon their homeward way
Save Peter and strong Robert, none
Were willing to obey.
And now he in the circle stood,
Where knights of Buda's lord
Most eagerly did press to see,
And catch his every word.
He said: "The holy army
A glorious victory won;
The Cross is now high-waving,
In light of the shining sun,
O'er Antioch's conquered towers;
The Crescent's power is broke;
The place of Christian name and fame
Is freed from heathen yoke.
But now, alas! it came to pass,
Within the walls secure,
They reveled in triumphant sin,
With joys not always pure;
And now Kerbogga frightens them,
Who, with unnumbered force,
Encircles all the towered wall,
And makes our plight much worse
Than 'twas before the victory;
To want and disease a prey,
To sally we the courage lack,
Against Kerbogga's sway."

A Song of Faith

When Buda's lord this speech had heard,
His eagerness all returned;
Again his iron purpose bright
Within his bosom burned.
And soon was mounted every knight,
The messenger, on his steed,
By Ladislaus, with rising Cross,
Who eagerly took the lead.
The sun before them brightly rose,
Thus riding, with steady pace;
Into the mouth of time they
threw
The dusty laps of space;
And finally, one morning bright,
Upon the hill they stood,
And looked on the plains of Antioch,
With anxious solicitude.

There sat Kerbogga warily,
Complacently, playing chess;
While through the bridge-gate, open
wide,
The army of Christians press.
They are humbled and with hunger
weak,
And dissipation, too,
Alas! But, in repentance now,
Their courage rises new.
Their need, against unequal force,
Forced them to sally out;
The muffled hum of prayer is
Their only battle shout.
They, in their deepest sorrow, found
The lance of strength, for the cause;

Book I—Canto the Sixth

They bear it on to triumph now,
Emblazoned 'neath the Cross.
Kerbogga's force, at bridge's gate
Is routed, as by a spell;
And fleet the couriers hie away,
Th' alarming news to tell.
Kerbogga, unperturbed, plays on,
And says: "Just let them come;
The more they be, more merrily,
We'll mow the Christians down.
The Christian force of sword and horse,
In order now spreads out,
Against the hill, in columns dense,
Still humming their battle shout.
The sun sends down, from heaven high,
On them a refreshing dew,
Which all as special benison
With joy then felt and knew.

Fair Buda's lord on hill near by,
Looked on the battle array;
Then on his good sword Balmung
looked,
Both keen, to join the fray.
The Hermit there beside him stood,
And did the events relate,
Of how the waves had hindered them,
His conduct to palliate;
The messenger, astanding there,
The Christian victories told,
And how the towers they had stormed,
When hemmed by waves so cold,
And, looking down on their array,
The Christian knights he named,

A Song of Faith

With deeds of prowess, they had done,
For which they were far-famed.
When, lo! the Legate they beheld,
The worthy Adhemar,
Arise in front of the array,
A Gideon in the war.
“ ’Twas he,” then said the messenger,
“ With zealous Godfrey’s aid,
Had held in reins of order fair,
Apostasy had stayed,
When waves, in front, and fear of foes,
Behind, made courage weak,
And many from the army fled,
A safe retreat to seek.”
And Peter turned and looked away,
Though they the words could hear
Which Adhemar’s oration held,
So strong to listening ear,
When they vibrate in bosom warm.
He gave the battle cry;
It was a prayer to Jesus Christ
Enthroned in power on high.
With this the Christian army now,
Moved on, in bold attack;
They drove the archers of the foe
In wild confusion back
Beneath the tread of calvary
Who came to meet the assault,
And of their boastful numbers proud,
Which was their fatal fault.
As pride stands not in conflict hard,
Their columns were repulsed
By numbers great, in being small,
And soon their ranks, convulsed

Book I—Canto the Sixth

With panic of disorder wild,
Were on the verge of flight;
The eyes of Buda's lord, the fair,
O'erflow with joy, at the sight.
The Ortokide, then, Sockman swart,
With effort rallied force,
And on the horseless Christians turned
A horde of sabered horse;
Houran then, too, and Haleb sleek,
By this example, bold,
Returned with horses snorting loud,
And sabers keen and cold,
Against the advancing Christian ranks,
And spreading carnage and death,
That victory now seemed to be
Suspended on a breath.
But, in the breath, like sign of death,
Adown from heaven high,
Fair Ladislaus adown the slope,
And over the plain did fly,
He on his steed of lightning speed,
With Lothar and Lythke ahead,
His white-plumed knights all following,
With equally pinioned tread.
And Adhemar, the Legate, said,
To Christians wavering cried:
"The saints are coming to our aid,
With us all Heaven's allied."
As when fleet force of lightening,
From cloud near by breaks loose,
And splinters gnarled forest-oaks,
And scatters splints profuse,
So Buda's lord, with flashing sword,
Did frighten the hostile ranks,

A Song of Faith

And splinter heads from turban bands,
And spatter the horses' flanks,
With blood and brain of falling foes,
Beneath the flash of steel,
In onward course, with flashing force,
Amid the battle's peal.
His course was irresistible
In drawing to its aid
The Christians, no more wavering,
Who everywhere now made
The enemy to turn and flee,
And drove their columns apart,
That great Kerbogga, in retreat,
Himself was forced to start.
The worthy Legate, Adhemar,
Passed over the battle ground,
The holy lance displaying there,
And loud was the joyous sound
Of thanks which he admonished to;
And, with the lance, so famed,
Fair Ladislaus, in victory,
With praises loud, was named.

Book II
Light in Darkness

Book II—Canto the First.

AURORA with the bride of morn,
Awoke and waked, in the bard,
A train of thought, with music fraught,
In which his high regard
For Christiana higher grew,
As grew a joyous desire
To sing of her, who from the sky
With new songs did inspire.
Oh, hear! oh, hear the songs he sung,
In darkness-discerning light!
Her name and her relation high
Raised them to a lofty flight,
In which we see fair Liberty
From ruins old arise,
With stars in tresses streaming far,
And kiss the bride of the skies.

Fair Christiana lonely sighed,
And lonely and mourning stood
Among the mounds, in churchyard-
grove,
Where from the autumn wood
The dry leaves fast were falling.
She looked on a new-piled heap;
The leaves there sighed beneath her feet,
As she knelt down to weep.
'Twas for Kanute, her father dear,
That Christiana was sad,

A Song of Faith

And lonely, in her sadness.

For Adelbert mourning, he had
Descended down the tearful path
Into the valley of death,
On her and her lord a blessing word
Bestowing, with his last breath.
She raised her eyes to heaven-ward,
To seek some solace there;
She, in her sighing soared away,
Borne on the wings of pray'r,
Away to the land of Salem.

She sighed: "Oh! must I stay?
How long, how long? my Saviour
dear!

Oh! give me strength, I pray!"
In clearer light, with hopes more bright,
Her new resolve then shone,
As she, now late, to Buda's gate
Hastened, with it alone.
Far o'er her home's cross-bearing domes,
Far, far she beheld her aim,
In the far land of Christian lore—
The lofty Jerusalem.

So strong the inspiration grew,
Of this new, love-fledged thought,
That at her home she had arrived,
And still she knew it not;
There nothing was to hold her there,
Her heart was far away,
And only to herself it was
Recalled by the parting day.
Straightway she ordered quietly,
That 'gainst the morning there should

Book II—Canto the First

The noblest palfrey be prepared,
That in her stables stood.
If any would objection raise,
As if, with their eyes, to say:
“It is too far good lady fair,
Too hard for thee, the way,”
With eyes so firm, she answered them,
They durst not speak it out;
And with her queenly firmness she
Suppressed all fear and doubt.
About her hair-locked forehead fair,
She bound a scarf full-plaid
With shreads of gold and silver spangs,
Which pressed her locks to a pad
Of comfort strong and durable,
From which her face serene
The emprise of her firmness beamed,
As of some ancient queen.
Then to her household wardens she
Gave orders brief and clear,
While these but nodded their assent,
Speechless with awe and fear;
But she to all her farewell said,
That new-born autumn day,
And on the road her palfrey strode
And she quietly rode away.
There was a broad and open road
For holy pilgrims, that led
Hard by the walls of Buda fair,
Well beaten by the tread
Of tearful Ruth and joyous Faith,
And marked by many a nook,
With what was best for pilgrim's rest;
This way Christiana took.

A Song of Faith

One afternoon, for her too soon,
She to the chapel came;
As many more had gone before,
She held it for a shame
To stop for rest; so on she pressed,
That afternoon so fair;
Her eagerness did onward press,
And banish every care.
But soon the shadows longer grew,
The evening air grew chill,
The leaves, beneath her palfrey's hoofs,
Did break the twilight still,
And she did look for chapel nook,
But not one came to sight;
The night began to lower come,
Its curtain began to fright
Her eagerness to care and fear,
Where she a lodging might find!
Where would she now good people find,
And to a pilgrim kind?
Great trouble now her mind did fill,
But soon she heard a sound
Of human voices, from a hill,
In forest dark around;
She looked and saw a beaten path
Which t'wards the voices ran,
And thither she her palfrey turned,
While shades her cheeks did fan.
The voices on ahead of her,
Grew loud and made her bold,
So onward she undaunted rode
Into the dark, dark wold.
She soon into a clearing came,
Of slightly rising ground,

Book II—Canto the First

Where brighter was the twilight air,
And clearer brake the sound;
So, in the clear embrazure, on,
And up the azure knoll
She rode; her anxious heart did make
The light-crowned crest her goal.
Thence she a bevy of children saw,
Three boys and three wee girls,
In childish glee there scampering;
Joy laughed from out the curls
Of life and health, in tangled wealth,
And scattered by the breeze,
As chatting, for the falling nuts,
They clubbed the autumn trees.
She stopped on the crest, and to her rest,
Enjoyed the idyllic sight,
All anxious care forgetting there,
And dark approach of night.
The boys took up and tightly tied
The well-filled sacks with glee,
The girls, with joy exuberant,
Embraced and kissed the tree,
And said: "We've clubbed thee hard,
 alas!
We hope we have caused no pain;
Many thanks, good tree, good-bye to
 thee,
Next year we'll come again."
Then down rode Christiana fair,
And when they saw her, they stared;
And, loud as they had been just now,
Now never a word they dared.
But she, with tone assuring them,
Recalled their courage, and said:

A Song of Faith

“God bless you all, my children dear,
I am in need of your aid,
To lead me, where to find for me
A lodging for the night
With Christians who'll be kind to me;
I'll do them what is right.”
A boy of twelve, the eldest one,
Then made this hearty reply:
“With all our heart, good lady fair!
We now are about to hie
Towards our home with gathered store;
'Tis heavy, as thou canst see;
And gladly there our father will
Give lodging unto thee.”
Her palfrey bore the gathered store,
The children led the way;
And followed Christiana fair
Their leading without dismay.
Through trackless tract of forest black
They eagerly pressed on;
The children's fleet and tramping feet,
On dry leaves and on stone,
With that of the weary palfrey's hoofs,
A noisy enchantment spread
Through forest still and growing chill,
As on the children led.
They came to the marge of forest large,
And, in the valley below,
They saw the domes of happy homes,
With lights in windows aglow.
“There it is,” the eldest said, with joy,
And all their eyes, the same,
As they into the valley looked,
And then at the stately dame;

Book II—Canto the First

“There is our dear, sweet home,” they
said;

“And there thou wilt find a rest,
For thee and thy weary palfrey,
And be a welcome guest.”

They lightly talked, as on they walked,
And entered the hamlet now;
Then all were hushed, and on they
rushed,

Ahead, and she saw how,
With joy, the parents them receive;
The father, with reverent air;
The mother, warmly took and kissed
The objects of her care.

This mother also welcomed her,
And drew her heart to her own,
As, with her sympathetic hands,
From horse she helped her down.
Fair Christiana’s surprise, at first,
To find a pastor’s wife,
Could not destroy the comfort’s joy,
There bathed in a Christian life,
Which from all hands and eyes did flow,
In household culture and grace,
That all her anxious solicitude,
And weariness gave place
To feeling of rest, on mother’s breast;
No stranger was she there,
Where she in such a mother’s heart,
At once, was made to share.

How sweet was there the humble fare!
How sweet the tender hands!
How pure was there devotion’s pray’r!
How strong the loving bands!

A Song of Faith

They bound to her those people dear;
Their evening pray'r her heart
With blessings of Christ's nearness
filled,
And to her did impart
Sweet rest, so easy and so soft,
As on sweet mercy's breast;
Soon, from the skies, her weary eyes
Were with sweet slumber blest.

Out-doors, the dew-bathed morning
Was waked by the peal of bells,
Which from the lofty steeple flowed,
And echoed in the dells;
So Christiana, on her couch,
Was waked, from balmy sleep,
Into a world of light and sound,
As if the azure deep
Were of rejoicing angels full,
And shouting morning stars,
And making quick the rays of light
Which fell through open bars
Upon her conscious pillow.
Uprose she most in haste,
For she did hate, in slumber late,
The morning hours to waste.
She donned her simple garments,
And, in the broad, clear day,
She looked, and lo, with people now
Was thronged the broad highway,
All coming to the village,
Toward the house of God,
From which the ringing steeple sent
The peals of praise abroad.

Book II—Canto the First

And Christiana hastened down,
The worshipers to join,
And entered, with high-bounding
heart,
The morning service divine.
The pastor to the chancel went,
The congregation rose,
And Scripture-word devoutly heard,
So full of strong repose:
*"The Word eternal was made flesh,
And 'mong us mortals dwelt,
And we his glory, the glory of
The Father's Son beheld,
Of God, the only begotten Son,
And full of grace and truth;"*
From which there sprang a sermon,
As fresh and simple as youth.

The pastor showed the people the
Eternal Word of God;
How he of old, in prophecy
Had spread His name abroad,
And poured it forth, like ointment,
To heal the serpent's bite;
How He, in human form, then had
Appeared to human sight,
And promised gracious blessings
Of truth, through Abram's Seed,
Which He himself from Egypt led,
With mighty sign and deed;
He gave them Manna heavenly;
This was th' eternal word,
The very God of Patriarchs,
Jehovah, God and Lord.

A Song of Faith

'Twas He, the pastor further showed,
Came to this earthly clod,
In human form not only, as
He erst the earth had trod,
But very man of woman born,
By verily human birth,
Of Abram's Seed and David's;
Thus dwelt He here on earth:
The Son, the Child, Immanuel,
Almighty God o'er all,
Who did, as God's eternal Word,
All things into being call.
He is the ancient Jesse's Root,
The Branch of David's stem,
The tender Plant up-springing
To Israel's Diadem;
The Day-spring from on High He is,
The Sun of Righteousness;
With healing in His wings He
comes,
He comes all men to bless.
Oh! let us kneel and worship Him,
That we His glory may see,
Him, speaking the creative word,
As on His mother's knee;
As in the words of prophecy,
So in His words fulfilled,
We worship Him, whose glory thus
Is in our hearts distilled.

The pastor then came forward,
The lambs of the flock to teach;
The truths of Advent, Christmastide,
In simpler form, to preach.

Book II—Canto the First

In questioning unfolding them,
He told how Christ was born,
How o'er the fields of Bethlehem
Brake forth the midnight morn.
The grace and truth, he further showed,
Which in this Infant shone;
Of virgin birth, by Holy Ghost,
Of all men holy alone;
And all for us poor mortals thus,
For whom He became of us,
To be our righteousness and life,
And make us glorious.
“Therefore, dear children, love Him,
Your Saviour and your Lord;
And in His love rejoicing walk,
And in the light of His word.”

The potent light, the Gospel light!
It filled Christiana's soul;
She saw her Lord, in His dear Word,
Which, like an opening scroll,
From the foundation of the world,
Did on and onward roll,
And did expand, beneath His hand,
Who in the Beginning was,
And now, to save from sin and death,
Did take our heavy cross.
Oh! bless the Lord, and bless His
Word!

For here was righteousness,
By faith, to cover all her sins,
With life, her soul to bless.
She felt that new life springing,
In love to God and man,

A Song of Faith

Made one in Him, who atoned for sin
And filled salvation's plan.
Her soul was so transported,
That now she scarcely heard
The pastor announce communion,
And speak the blessing word;
And when the congregation
Bowed down in silent pray'r,
She, too, bowed down, in silence,
While rhapsodies filled the air.

The pastor, for communion,
Then special instruction gave,
How in His body, all our sins
Christ bore and bled, to save;
How now these pledges He doth give,
His body and His blood,
That we by faith in Him may live,
In His beatitude.
He would us in the truth have
firm,
With strong assurance of faith,
Which always unto those belongs,
Who take Him, as He saith.
Thus cling we to our Saviour dear,
Thus dwells He in our hearts,
With grace and truth and blessedness,
Which He to us imparts.
The pastor thus instructed all,
And waved the darkness away,
Which everywhere, alas! he said,
Now held destructive sway.
He said: "The Lord a table hath
Prepared before us here,

Book II—Canto the First

In presence of our enemies;
Let all believe, nor fear
Their persecution lowering,
Which we have but to await;
Our faith must yield a ready shield,
Our love must arm 'gainst hate;
For God the Lord is on our side,
Be strong in faith and love!
His covenant shall firm abide,
Both here and there above."

And Christiana trembled most,
Beneath the strong resolve
Of Faith, as his concluding words
Did in her mind revolve.

Book II—Canto the Second

IT was an autumn Sunday morn,
Again the sounding bells
Sent forth their peals of praises loud
Through the surrounding dells.
Down flowed along with sunbeams
strong
The potent harmony,
And touched the chords of faith and love
To fullest vibrancy.
From hearts of Christians many-toned,
Each, with its tender thong
Attuned by pressure different,
Arose the harmonious song,
Of grief and joy, remorse and praise;
All joining in Jesus' name,
The fullness of His grace and truth
The heart's song did proclaim.
And, in Siloah, now the church
With folk began to fill,
From all directions coming on,
In friendly groups and still
Their conversation muffled was,
As was their halting tread,
And over all there seemed to hang
Some vague and awful dread.
From quivering lips, the whispers
hushed,
Went 'round from ear to ear,

Book II—Canto the Second

From group to group, as on they came,
Increasing each other's fear,
With questions, bearing the alarm:
"Heard ye of Arnold's horde,
A coming upon our village dear,
With bloody pike and sword?"
So, when the church they entered,
In fervent prayer they bowed,
And in the peace, they thus received,
New trust in Jesus avowed.
Fair Christiana's feelings were
Those of a tender bride,
Awaiting strength to flow to her
From her dear bridegroom's side.
She willing was her life to pour
Into that flood of His,
By which He cleansed her of her sin
And filled her soul with bliss.
Sincere her vow's intent, although
Its real extent, alas!
She could not know, nor yet foresee,
How soon it would come to pass.

With clearest demonstration calm,
Of spirit and of power
The pastor preached the gospel pure
To suit the present hour;
From God's clear word, their faith he
showed,
As built upon the Rock
Of Ages where it stands prepared
For every earthly shock.
They sang: "The Lord a table hath
Prepared before us here,

A Song of Faith

In presence of our enemies;
Let all believe, nor fear
Their persecution lowering,
Which we but have to await;
Our faith must yield a ready shield,
Our love must arm 'gainst hate;
For God, the Lord is on our side,
Be strong in faith and love;
His covenant shall firm abide,
Both here and there above."
Fair Christiana forward came,
All veiled in heavenly light,
With radiant tears of faith and love,
And knelt in the holy rite.
The pastor there the wafer laid
Upon her trembling tongue;
"Take, eat," he said, while praises loud
Arose, in trustful song:
"This is Christ's holy body,
Which for thy sins was given;
May this e'er strengthen thee and keep,
To life with Him in Heaven."
And to her marble lips of love
He held the chalice, and said:
"Take, drink the blood of Jesus Christ,
Which for thy life was shed."
Then in a trance of prayer wrapped
Again to her place she went,
And others came and kneeling there,
Received the sacrament.
Grandfathers and grandmothers gray,
And men, in the strength of years,
Whose locks of iron-gray began
To cluster about their ears,

Book II—Canto the Second

And matrons brisk with household cares,
And youths and maidens, in bloom,
Some tender, and some more mature,
All for each other made room,
As they up to the altar came,
Received the sacrament,
And then, with praising hearts, again
Back to their places went.

Then all at once, outside was heard
A loud and rumbling sound,
At which the church was darkened
By warriors all around.

As when a crowd of children,
At all-forgetting play,
Are by a clap of thunder scared,
And darkened is the day,
So was that congregation scared
By that loud, sudden sound,
And by the darkening warriors,
Who gathered all around,
Then up the aisle three men, in
arms

And clattering armor, clad,
With look of ostentatious threat,
Did stalk in manner mad;
The pastor hushed and silent was,
The people crouched in fear;
They looked to him inquiringly
From danger now so near.
As when on feeding harvest hen,
The hawk from bramble breaks,
Her busy clucking soon is hushed,
Her brood, in silence, quakes

A Song of Faith

And crouches down in tear and dread,
With eyes on her, what next,
So was the pastor in silence hushed,
So crouched the people vexed,
With eyes on him, what now to do,
So sadly all perplexed.
Those men in armor loudly spake
To the assembly there:
"Your pastor is a heretic,
As he is well aware;
His preaching is forbidden here,
And he has not obeyed;
Therefore we're come, to bring him
bound,
Where humble he'll be made."
At this, throughout the house of God
A muffled murmur passed;
But on the people one dark frown
Those men in armor cast,
And turned upon the pastor then,
A prisoner him to bind,
When several sturdy townsmen
Arose in the church behind.
These nearer to the pastor pressed,
Perplexed, what they should do;
Their sad, sad glances here and there,
And to their pastor flew.
They came so near, he heard their
breath,
When one of the soldiers turned,
And, seeing them so boldly near,
In violent anger burned;
He drew his sword, without a word,
And raised it, for a stroke

Book II—Canto the Second

Upon the nearest townsman brave,
Who neither flinched nor spoke;
But, twirling his brawny arm in air,
The sweeping weapon caught,
In hand thus gashed with bleeding
wound;
The blood he heeded not,
But brought, with mighty blow and
quick,
The weapon's heavy hilt
Upon the soldier's fenseless head,
Who sank down in his guilt.
Now into the confusion wild,
The man with sword cried loud,
The hilt now in the bleeding hand,
He cried to the rushing crowd:
"Away, away to safety now,
Escape to forest and cave,
And all my bleeding hand can do,
I'll do our pastor to save."
And old and young and weak and strong
For doors and windows rushed,
But many a meek and praying voice,
By violent hands was hushed.
The only way some did escape,
Was by that stern brave man,
Who stood with brand, in bleeding hand,
For whom the soldiers ran,
Thus giving chance to get away;
Alas! a meager chance,
For soldiers pressed in thickly now,
With death in every glance.
Meanwhile the man, with bleeding hand,
The two who effort made,

A Song of Faith

His pastor to bind a prisoner
In mighty combat laid,
In guilty death upon the floor;
And many others, who had
Attacked the man, with bleeding hand,
Lay there in armor clad.
“Dear brother,” then the pastor said,
“Now stay thy bleeding hand;
Thy noble strife is all in vain
Against this mighty band;
Since by thy hand already now
Escaped are all who may,
So spare the blood of guilty men,
And down thy weapon lay.”
Said he: “Dear pastor, this dark steel
Is bloody of mine own blood,
And more to spill I ready am,
If that will serve any good,
The sword I drop, I took not up,
So, take my soul, O Lord!”
And by a soldier’s weapon pierced,
He sank without a word.
A silent spell on all now fell,
The dying groans were hushed;
Their white-robed spirits rising thence,
Like rising breezes, brushed
The tender sense of Stephan’s faith;
They rose to realms of light,
Where all his faith to them was changed
To ever peaceful sight.
He sighed: “Oh! what a monster dark
Here drinks the blood of saints!
What irresponsible power high
Beyond all godly restraints!

Book II—Canto the Second

O, soldiers, oh! ye do not know,
By what dark power enthralled,
Ye here have murdered, murdered
saints,
To higher glory called.”
Then, raising his eyes: “O, Waldo!
Of seeds which thou didst sow
Thy harvest comes to thee Above,
Sooner than thou didst know.
With all thine earthly riches,
And gospels, in thy hand,
Forth, from thine earthly home didst go,
To flocks in famished land;
In humble habit wandering,
Didst spread broadcast thy stores
Of living seed, with loving deed,
As stooping cloud outpours
Its blessings forth on famished earth:
So didst thou far and near
Thy blessings sow, until thou
camest
Into this valley here.
Here plants of thy blest sowing,
Of humble faith and love,
Were watered by thy memory,
Since thou hast gone Above.
But darkness and destruction swift
Have followed thy heavenly shower,
And soon my soul, with thee in rest,
Will be beyond their power.
O, thou meek Waldo! who in life
The seeds of life didst sow!
Thy harvest comes to thee Above
Sooner than thou didst know.”

A Song of Faith

But now the soldiers, standing by,
Their courage again recalled,
Which Stephan's high solemnity
Had for a spell appalled;
And turning, they laid upon him
Their bloody, violent hands,
To bear him away to prison,
Fast bound in culprit bands.
Fair Christiana, in ecstasy
Of anguish and fear, had swooned,
Her body's limbs were lank and numb,
While yet in her mind there loomed
A mirage of what she saw and heard,
Refined into ghostly forms;
And, seen by the soldiers, where she lay,
They took her up in their arms,
And carried her out and tethered her,
Like Stephan, to the steed;
Then mounted in haste and rode away
With loud and clattering speed.

Away, to a stony castle,
Away, by the stormy sea,
Where, on the stormy and rocky
shore,
The waves perpetually
Against the silent butments beat,
As 'gainst man's silent woes
The ocean waves of time do beat
With loud monotonous throes;
Away to this castle prison
The man of God was borne,
With Christiana, in her swoon,
And cast in its cells forlorn.

Book II—Canto the Second

Here Christiana did awake,
But, still perturbed in mind,
She looked around and Stephan saw,
And visions uttered, refined
Beyond the bounds of sense and sight:—
“O Stephan, if that be thou!
O tell me, how we hither came!
And, oh! where are we now?
And, oh! the journey wonderful!
The ride—the flight—so far—
So high—so low—from thy church—oh!
And now, to where we are!
Oh! Oh! those armored soldiers,
Who thee a prisoner bound,
Then, with their bloody weapons,
Made blood flow all around!
Then, oh! from clouds of darkness,
A loathsome monster came,
And drank the blood, in drunken mood,
As were, in heaven, no shame!
The spirits then I saw ascend,
All clad in robes of white,
With clouds of witnesses, on high,
To realms of peaceful light.
Oh! how my soul then to my Lord,
With trembling faith did cling!
As soon before His throne, I thought,
I'd hear the martyrs sing!
But no! just then a power stark
Was holding me, I found,
And to the loathsome monster dark,
With fetters I was bound!
And, oh! the journey wonderful!
The ride—the flight—so far—

A Song of Faith

So high—so low—from thy church—oh!
And now, to where we are!”
And Stephan answered thoughtfully:
“O, Christiana! to thee
It all more truly did appear,
Than it appeared to me.
The blood of my wife and children
I saw, in purple flow,
When overwhelming anguish
There spread a quivering glow
Before my tearless vision.
Then we were carried away,
On horses bound and fettered,
Of merciless power to play.
But, Christiana! thou didst see
A higher vision of all,
For God, in mercy wonderful,
Thy sight away did call.
And though we are imprisoneed here,
Thou wilt not die with me;
But He whose mercy holdeth thee
Shall surely make thee free.
How happy now my death shall be,
Since this assurance I have,
That I the grace and truth have preached,
Which thee can surely save!
It is the light in darkness,
The gospel from on High;
An angel bright shall bear this light
High through the midst of the sky,
And shall give freedom to the world
And free thee and the Word,
And ‘Babylon is fallen!’
In triumph shall be heard;

Book II—Canto the Second

And from the ruins there shall rise
The bride of humanity,
With star-decked tresses streaming far,
And kiss the bride of the sky.”
Fair Christiana’s eyes were pearly,
But Stephan’s eyes were dry;
Too deep the depth of feeling was,
The height of faith too high,
From which these words were spoken;
Apocalyptic light
Shone forth upon her, from his eyes,
In gaze, mild, firm and bright.
A pause of silence sad and deep
Followed these words of faith;
Besides the wailing of the waves,
There was but sound of breath.
Let storms now crash and wild waves
dash
Against man’s silent woes,
Fair Christiana’s faith is raised,
O’er them and all her foes.

But now loud strokes the silence broke
Of footsteps from afar,
And Stephan said: “My time is come,
To go where my loved ones are.
Farewell! O Christiana fair!
Farewell, oh! fare thee well!
My spirit now embraces thee,
Much dearer than I can tell!
Thou Lord’s fair bride! He’s on thy side;
Be strong in faith and love;
His covenant must firm abide,
Both here and there Above!”

A Song of Faith

The sound of Stephan's parting words
Broke through the opening door,
Out on the rolling waters high,
And joined the waves' loud roar.
Three men came in, in armor clad,
And Stephan, with coarse abuse,
They led away. To her they said:
"For thee we have other use."

Book II—Canto the Third

WAS twilight on the waters;
The clouds the sun of his rays
Had shorn, themselves adorning,
And them, in their workshops' maze
Of milliard active lenses,
Had wrought into gems aglow
With colors deep, in hues to keep,
And paved the waves below;
While he, thus shorn, yet glorious,
In glory the eye could behold,
Sank down upon his crimson bed,
And soon the winds blew cold.
With canvas full of breezes chill,
A vessel glided in,
With keel of gold-splashed ebony,
And sails of purple sheen;
Her prow a bold bull's head of gold,
With eyes of sapphire stone,
And high a-mast the beacon light
In flames of amber shone.
The sailors, in their places, moved
Like players, on the stage,
And easily the vessel hove
To lulling anchorage.
No harbor was to enter there,
So she rocked on the deep
Like bird of passage, from the north,
In blooming grove, asleep.

A Song of Faith

Out from the dark gray prison walls,
Fair Christiana was led,
And pale around her on the scene,
She looked with reeling head.
Directly o'er the waters dark,
On shifting bridge of yawls,
She on was led into the bark,
And heard the captain's calls.
Forthwith the anchor hove aboard,
The vessel sailed away;
Clouds could not hold their stolen hoard,
And darkened was the day.
So, in unequal simile,
The light of life was shorn,
By human reason, of its rays,
Man's power to adorn;
But human thought the light did blot,
And darkened was the day,
When, on the sea, the church's ship,
In darkness sailed away.
But Christiana, in her ship,
Saw not the darkness without;
The brightness she around her saw,
Admitted to her no doubt,
But that the light did still prevail,
On waves and in the clouds;
She knew not yet that these were dark,
All changed to death-dark shrouds.
For all within was bright as day
With numerous tapers' glare;
And gold and costly jewels shone,
In cornice and everywhere,
On curtains and on tapestries
Which waved, in luxurious ease,

Book II—Canto the Third

Like blooming fronds of mangoes wave,
In twilight luster and breeze.
How well must Christiana fare,
In all these glories of earth!
Alas! to her imprisoned there,
What were these glories worth?
Jerusalem was her firm goal,
Her bridegroom there to join,
And all the glories of the world
Her love could not purloin.
Her vision by these glories were
But dazzled and made dim;
A gloom of horror did o'erspread
Her thoughts, which were of him.
She to her bosom pressed her hand,
And raised her eyes to Heaven,
And through her tears, by prayers strong,
The gloomy veil is riven.
The Light shines through, with rainbow
tints,
And in it, far away,
She in the land of promise sees
Him, in his bright array;
She gazes, gazes, gazes on,
Her soul more than her eyes,
And nearer, nearer, nearer now
The sweet scene seems to rise.
She prayed: "O, Jesus, Lord and
God,
Keep, keep my soul with thee!
A power, I know not what and where,
Is bearing away with me!
'Tis light within; alas! without,
All, all is dark around,

A Song of Faith

As I can feel the heavy din
Of waves' deep, muffled sound!
O, Jesus, keep my soul, I pray,
In fellowship with thee!
And from this power of worldly
pomp,
O, Lord, deliver me,
That I may go away, away,
Away to the promised land,
And see him, in his bright array,
And take his tender hand."

Yes; now she knew that all was dark,
She felt the death-dark pall;
But there within the ship, she saw.
That crew and servants all
But sought to please her, with their
works,
Not asking what, or how,
With incense rank and service blank,
And with obsequious bow.
In different orders, all arranged,
Which she in their robes could note,
They, in their different rôles, did move,
Performing them by rote.

One thing, withal, to her was plain
(What almost made her smile),
That all was done, with one grand aim,
Her heart's ease to beguile,
And make her happy and glorious,
While never they inquired,
If this or that to her were right,
Or what her heart desired.
'Twas by another all prescribed,
A foreign law to them;

Book II—Canto the Third

And thus they made their service cold,
And kissed her garments' hem.
Regarding not their service cold,
She from her bosom took,
And 'gan to read, with humble faith,
Her precious holy Book,
The word of God whose glory bright
Had made her soul rejoice,
When, with the sound of ocean waves,
There came a mighty voice:
"Be faithful ye, her servants all,
And servants of the Lord,
And serve her, as my word commands,
And great shall be your reward!"
Then all fell down before him there,
As he passed proudly by,
To front of Christiana fair
With dark, commanding eye.
Quoth he: "I am Mauhassim,
The mighty; all glory and power,
Of all and o'er all nations wide,
That dwell on earth, in dower
Of Christ, the mighty Ruler
Of Heaven and earth, I hold;
This heart of mine, shall be His shrine,
His laws, on earth, to unfold.
And thou, fair lady, too, art mine,
'Neath my protection given,
To rule, to govern, and protect,
And lead thee, as from Heaven;
And I will make thee glorious,
The queen of all the world,
And all the banners of power thus
To thee shall be unfurled."

A Song of Faith

But firmly, meekly answered she,
For great was her alarm;
She answered him, with downcast eyes:
"I need no protecting arm;
Much less do I directing need,
As thy proud heart may choose;
And as for all thy worldly power,
Its glory I refuse.
The Lord of Heaven is my Lord,
His pure word is my guide;
And I desire liberty,
To go to my bridegroom's side."
Now did dark-eyed Mauhassim
Becalm his muttering mien
Which liked to burst, in thunder,
Had he not wanted to wean,
Instead of force, the lady fair
Into submission to him;
His eyes flashed lightning thunderless,
As he began his theme:
"Thou knowest not thy calling,
Which proves thy need of my power;
If thou alone dost pilgrim on,
Wild beasts may thee devour,
Or wicked men may take thee,
For their own wicked use,
Whilst thou art called to glory
Which I can bestow profuse.
I am, I am Mauhassim,
The mighty; all glory and power,
Of all and o'er all nations wide,
Who dwell on earth, in dower
Of Christ, the mighty Ruler
Of Heaven and earth; I hold;

Book II—Canto the Third

This heart of mine shall be the shrine,
His laws, on earth, to unfold.
And thou, fair lady, too, art mine,
'Neath my protection given,
To rule, to govern, and protect,
And lead thee, as from Heaven——”
He further would have spoken thus,
But with her holy Book,
His speech she interrupted,
Which changed to an angry look;
With strength of meekness, then spake
she:

“Here is mine only guide;
And I desire my liberty,
To go to my bridegroom's side.”
He deep and long, from bosom strong,
Breathed down his anger still,
Which from his clouded eyes did flash,
Against his mighty will;
But uttered words unbending now:
“No Lord hast thou but me;
My word, and not another's word,
Shall be a guide to thee;
That Book's forbidden; I alone,
Thy reading must select,
For, in my power, by Heaven's
dower,
I rule thee and protect.
Thus will I make thee glorious,
The queen of all the world,
And all the banners of power thus
To thee shall be unfurled.”
He spake, and proudly turned about,
And all his servants fell

A Song of Faith

Prostrate before him on the floor,
As by a holy spell,
And crouched to kiss his hands and feet,
And for his welfare prayed;
And homage low to every word
From his pale lips they payed;
Then rose, their service to renew
To Christiana, so cold
With pomp of words, it never could
Her pure affections hold.

Without, through dashing billows,
The ship careened and plowed;
Within, was pomp of service,
While Christiana bowed,
In absent-minded, humble faith,
Her heart all steeped in pray'r,
And crying aloud to Jesus Christ:
"Oh! where am I, oh! where?
And who is this Mauhassim?
No, no, 'tis not from Thee
He has the power he boasteth of,
To lord it over me!
No; Thy dear word alone, O Lord!
Must be, in all, my guide;
Oh! from these bonds deliver me,
Lead me to my bridegroom's side!"
Whilst thus she prayed and was dismayed,
She heard Mauhassim roar:
"We've come to land with city grand,
So open wide the door,
And bring our gentle lady fair
Into the resonant halls;

Book II—Canto the Third

And all the worthies bow the knee!
The galaxy on the walls,
Now saints in Heaven, bow the knee!
And pray our queen godspeed!
And for her grand triumphant march,
With God all intercede!"

His minions did, as they were bid,
And led the gentle queen
Into the halls all resonant,
And bathed in gorgeous sheen;
The whole seemed one grand structure,
Of which the ship was a part,
Profusely decked with paintings grand,
Of ancient and modern art.

Here spake again Mauhassim:
"By authority divine,
This lady fair I've taken,
Henceforth forever, as mine;
Of earth she is the fairest,
And I'm her only lord,
And who now would, must serve her,
According to my word;
Thus will I make her glorious,
The queen of all the world,
And all the banners of power thus,
To her shall be unfurled."

Mauhassim then his minions all
Detailed instruction gave,
How they all power in the world,
Should claim, the world to save.

He said: "My servants, hear me!
The masses gain, by means
Of Christiana's graces fair,
Then through the masses, liens

A Song of Faith

And legal rights, and these extend
With dexterous hand so far,
That other rights they swallow up;
Then mount into the car
Of state, and hand the reins to me,
To whom they must belong;
Nor be at all too scrupulous,
Or careful of right or wrong.
Of course, fine morals you must preach
And fair philosophy, too;
But ne'er forget their precepts are
For others, and not for you.
Your all o'erruling principle
Is one: Be loyal to me;
From all, not thus subservient,
This one doth make you free.
If then your deeds be scrutinized,
To your sound morals appeal,
As over common judgment raised,
And aimed for the common weal.
But if with party's faults reproached,
Protest, with innocent mien,
If e'er a faultless party had
In this dark world been seen?
Thus use all rights, all parties, and—
The sponsors be for none;
For all the reins of right and might
Belong to me alone.
With iron grasp, I hold them,
And, with the thunder's force,
I'll wield them, in the world, against
All who oppose my course.
Be wieldy, then, my servants!
Be wily, wise, to win!

Book II—Canto the Third

Be easy, as the serpent's coil,
And be as smooth as sin!
Cast all your faults, that open are,
To common faults of men;
And claim the honor of all good,
For avoiding sins most plain.
But claim ye, loudly claim ye,
For only doing the good
Of commonest humanity,
Humanity's gratitude."
When thus Mauhassim had discoursed,
The smoke of incense rose,
And sun's fair light, now rising bright,
Entirely did out-close.
Prostrate his minions fell and said:
"Thy heart shall be the shrine
To us of all authority;
Our wills are wholly thine,
We'll make our lady glorious,
The queen of all the world,
And all the banners of power thus,
To thee shall be unfurled."
Meanwhile fair Christiana stood,
Unconscious of being seen;
Her heart's faith and desire strong
About her threw a screen,
In which she lonely lived and loved,
And longed for freedom alone,
To go to her bridegroom, in the land,
Where pristine light first shone.
And though the glory and pomp of earth,
To others, here so grand,
Were overwhelming billows dark,
Her bearing firm her strand,

A Song of Faith

Yet still the light of promise bright,
Despite Mauhassim's power,
Shone in her earthly prison there,
As from a heavenly tower.
And though she now was carried far,
O'er many lands and seas,
And, in her name, the people were
All forced to bend the knees
To dark Mauhassim's mighty nod,
Yet all unreal, as a dream
And nightmare of the night, to her
Mauhassim's power did seem.
So, where she went, she did instruct,
To look to Christ alone,
And from His word, her bosom held,
The heavenly light still shone
And many, many saw the light,
And followed that holy Book;
In spirit and truth they worshiped
God,
And all but Christ forsook.
They blessed her for her blessings,
And filled her heart with joy,
Which all Mauhassim's service grand,
In her, could but annoy.
Such wonders he enacted now,
In Christiana's name,
It made her soul in anguish bow,
And made her blush for shame.
But what, oh! what could she then do,
Against Mauhassim's might?
He held her in imprisonment,
And banished her word of light!

Book II—Canto the Third

She could but in her bosom nurse
The pure faith of her soul,
And trust the Lord, to lead her out,
To reach her happy goal.
But others now began to see
And feel her sorry plight;
They saw and felt it and affirmed,
As of her holy right,
To go unlorded, on her way,
Save by the Lord, in Heaven,
In use of her fair liberty,
Which He to her hath given.
And many, many joined the cry
Against Mauhassim's power;
But he with voice unbending, high,
Of thunder made them cower.
And all who would not bend to him
He in her own fair name,
Condemned to sword and burning
torch,
Which hence was always aflame.
Fair Christiana lived in prayer,
In prayer sad and deep;
So heavy, sad, and deep it was,
It clogged her power to weep.
"How long, O, God! how long," she
cried,
"Wilt hide thy face from me?
How long, O God! how long," she sighed,
"Must I a prisoner be,
And give my name to foulest shame,
My faith, to be trodden down,
By this Mauhassim, monster mad,
And by his minions in gown?

A Song of Faith

Oh! keep my soul from soil of sin!
Thy word alone is my guide,
Oh! make it free and, with it, me,
To go to my bridegroom's side."
While Christiana hoped and prayed,
Tumultuous noise she heard,
Like billows multitudinous
By deepest turmoil stirred;
And loud the mad Mauhassim's voice
Was heard o'er all the roar,
Commanding silence to the noise,
But it grew more and more.
From one clear voice, it spread and grew,
Waves dashed against the bark,
And lightning, in thunder, flew
O'erhead, in heavens dark.
She then that voice of clarion heard,
As from the midst of Heaven:
"Fear God, and let the glory all
To Him alone be given!
The hour of judgment is now come,
Give praise to Him who made
The heavens and earth and sea and land,
And their foundations laid."
"Down, down to me!" Mauhassim
joined
His voice with the thunder's roar;
But louder o'er the tumult grew
That clarion voice the more.
At this, to Christiana, there
Upon the ship there rushed
A man, as mild as angel fair,
But all with energy flushed:

Book II—Canto the Third

He cried: "Thank God, the die is cast,
And thou shalt go with me;
The hour of judgment now is come,
And thou shalt now be free."
Forthwith the bark away did break,
From mad Mauhassim's power;
The storm subsided, on the sea,
To a refreshing shower.
Then brake the moon through columns
high
Of clouds, in the heavens fleet,
As they sailed onward and away;
Fair Christiana's feet
On the reflected moon's full orb,
In ocean seemed to rest,
As on the prow, an angel now,
Her fain eyes onward pressed.
They onward, in the moonglade
prowed,
And, as they sailed along,
The hero, he of liberty,
Of freedom sang a song:

"She's dear to my heart, the precious
maid,
And never to be forgotten;
Praise, honor, and virtue of her are said,
And her my heart doth dote on.

"The crown of her head is purer than
gold,
And twelve are the stars there shining;
And fairer than the sun to behold,
Her garment of silver lining.

A Song of Faith

“ Her feet are upon the argent moon,
Bright stars are in her tresses;
To her the time is always noon,
Light comes to her caresses.

“ At this, Mauhassim was filled with
wrath,
Her freedom he sought, to destroy it,
But all his raging is waste of breath,
He cannot now annoy it.”

Thus sweetly he of liberty
Sang, as they moved along,
And meekly Christiana bowed,
When he wove in his song
Her longing love, and anguish sore,
Beneath Mauhassim's power,
And that to her her freedom was
Of faith a safe strong tower.
He sang, too, of the glory fair,
Which she, in future, would have;
Not earthly power and glory vain,
For which Mauhassim doth rave,
But glory bright of faith and light,
Of golden truth and love,
Not seen, indeed, by carnal eyes,
But by her Lord above.
He sang then, too, of blessings
true
Of fairest liberty,
When fairer skies should see arise
The bride of humanity.
He said: “ O, Christiana fair!
The Lord of Heaven's thy guide;

Book II—Canto the Third

He'll lead thee to enjoyment safe,
At thy fair bridegroom's side.
The land we are near, as I can hear
The billows loudly roar
Which splash the land upon the strand,
And kiss that happy shore.
Thence wilt thou straightway forward
go,
And pass by Askalon,
Down into Lorek's valley low,
Where Sampson, Manoah's son
By fair Delilah was beguiled.
Then out of the wicked land
Of Philistines thy course will bear,
And, leaving to thy right hand
The place, where once the Ark sojourned,
Gibeah of Benjamin,
Thou wilt, from Ephraim's mountains
come
Into a fertile plain;
There, soon will rise, to thy fair eyes,
The hills of Jerusalem,
And thou wilt find, in hearts more kind,
Thy long desired aim."

Book II—Canto the Fourth

WAS dark in Salem's holy land,
The gates of Morn and E'en
Were held by demons of the night,
For deeds, not to be seen.
In fleecy sleep the lamb reclines,
The wary wolf's abroad;
The stag his antlered head doth rest,
Between his hoofs, on sod,
And, with closed eye, the hart, near by,
Enjoys the browse of the day,
While tigers and hyenas fierce
The brambles search for prey.
The dove, with mate, in foliage,
Is perched, in sweet repose,
While owls, with eyes for darkened skies,
Which to the light they close,
Fly forth to banquets, warm with life,
Of claw-torn, feathered flesh,
And weasels sneak and sharply seek
The life-blood warm and fresh.
The hen, with head beneath her wings,
Which o'er her brood are spread,
With them reposes in her nook,
Now that they all are fed,
But fox and owl and jackal prowl
Through forest, field and fen,
And find the nook, with hook and crook,
Where nestles the nustling hen.

Book II—Canto the Fourth

So, too, 'mong men, it is the same,
The honest in sleep repose;
But thieves are out and prowl about,
Though unprovoked, the foes
Of thrift and peaceful property;
In hours all dark, and ways,
They seek to plunder earnings fair
Of many honest days.
Then, too, the victims of dark hate,
Of envy, rancor and spite,
With bloody steel and burning torch,
And covered by the night,
Do dye with blood the solitude,
And fill the night with fears
Of loud black-clouded flames, and thus,
The day, with bitter tears.
Lucrece reclines, in curtained night,
With chastely pillowed nape,
While Tarquin turns the chamber
latch,
Intent on lustful rape.
The chieftain in his tent doth sleep,
His strength rests on the fair
And honest plans which he doth keep,
His dreaming mind, in air,
The martial scales exploring deep,
While Ephealtes goes
And treacherously the enemy
Unfair advantage shows.

So, on the mount of Olivet,
Fair-Christiana slept
The sleep of holy innocence
And calmly Gabriel kept

A Song of Faith

The watches of the stilly night,
On shining wings of thought,
While, in dark Salem Soldan's king
His plans of warfare wrought.
Within his tent reclining, too,
Brave Ladislaus and true,
In unsuspecting slumber, slept,
To honest hearts e'er due,
While there without, and 'round about,
A spectral maiden form,
With unkempt locks of starless night,
Neglectful of maiden charm,
In darkness, shadowed flittingly
By dying embers' glow,
Did wander and, in lonely speech,
Mutter, in accents low:
"Oh, thou, my heart's bright treasure!
Why wilt not shine for me?
O Ladislaus, of noble house!
What bar's twixt me and thee?
Oh, yes! oh, yes! I now perceive,
I see and understand;
It is this holy warfare here,
This craze for the Holy Land!
Ye Gods! O, Mars and Venus!
My cause now calls for you;
As once of eld fair Helen held
Your love, to me now due;
For hence I to the Soldan go,
To lead him forth aright,
To burn the Christians' towers down
And storm their camps by night."
Thus, in the heart of Helen fair,
Kerchnea's gushing stream,

Book II—Canto the Fourth

Which flows in Lerna's pleasant meads,
Was her rhapsodic dream.
'Twas thither she did wish that he
With her might come; the towers
Of Christian faith she hates, because
They keep him from those bowers.
Hence forth she to the Soldan went,
To lead him forth aright,
To burn the Christians' towers down,
And storm their camp by night.

In lofty Salem Soldan's king,
In dimly lighted halls,
A council of war was holding,
To keep Jerusalem's walls
Beneath the waning power of
His half moon's hazy light,
Debarring Christian nations
From their original right.
High on his throne, he sat alone,
Bedecked with jewels and gold,
Aladdin gray to fear a prey
With troubled look and bold;
And deep the furrows care had
plowed,
Beneath his hoary locks,
For 'twas his peace the Crusade near
Had given such mighty shocks.
In grand divan of Mussulman,
Apparent were his fears;
There was Arslan of Nice, the brave,
Yet in the bloom of years,
And driven, by those Christian swords,
Sheer from his royal seat;

A Song of Faith

There was Kerbogga, humbled from
Fair Antioch's defeat;
There from Damaskus proud Argant,
Deprived of royal power;
There of Aleppo, brave Orcan; —
All minded the king, that hour,
Of sorest danger, darkening,
Since now the arms of the Cross
Were laying siege to Salem, bold
And glorving in their cause.
The hoary King of Salem spake:
"Ye lords of wisdom and power,
Who hold your thrones and kingdoms
dear,
By mighty Allah's dower;
And rule them just as mightily!
And ye, who, in our realm,
With counsels have our hand made
strong,
In steering the stately helm!
Now give us of your wisdom use,
In using of our might;
For what, in this great need, we do,
We needs must do aright.
Erstwhile our walls were frightened,
But by the distant fame
Of victories of Christian arms
Whose courage burns, like flame
Increasing by what it devours;
The proof our heart appalls;
But now the clouds are gathering
Around our sacred walls.
Lo, where the Cross's towers stand,
With bold and threatening mien!

Book II—Canto the Fourth

To-morrow's sun may shine upon
Their eager weapons' sheen."
Thus spake the hoary Soldan king,
And silence from his lips
Upon the warriors all around
Fell, with the blight that clips
The wings of fair oration;
Not knowing, to shape their words,
That, in their plight, they some way
might

Some glory show of their swords.
Fair speech first to Kerbogga came,
And thus he blandly spake:
"Aladdin great, of Soldan state!
I see no reason to take
So great alarms from Christian's arms;
Still firm thy power stands,
A rising star, and shining far,
Against all Western lands.
With all they've done, what have they
won?

United our forces here,
And theirs in towns have scattered
'round;

So we have naught to fear.
Just let them come, we'll send them
home,

From unsurmountable walls;
Defending these, we'll conquer them,
As e'er occasion calls."

Then spake the fiercer Arslan thus:

"My word is for the field;
The honor of my saber keen
I never to Christians yield.

A Song of Faith

At Nice they won, but I can show,
That it was not my fault;
Had I been in my citadel,
From thence to have made assault,
I would have scattered Baldwin's force
To all the winds of the earth,
And saved our frontier's pride and
strength,
And my soul's pride, Jugirth.
But, in my absence, counsels, sir,
My brave Kerbogga, prevailed,
As now, well-meaning, thou dost give;
The siege went unassailed;
And thus it was, that Nice was lost,
Our frontier's fort and pride,
And I, alas! was plundered of
My youth's still tender bride."
And sullenly Argant then spake,
As from a troubled mood,
He suddenly appeared to wake:
"The counsel is mainly good,
Although somewhat inspired by
A feeling of wounded pride,
And by the loss of his Jugirth,
His youth's still tender bride.
Howbeit, this I would yet add,
Our force to muster well;
And further prudence I would urge,
In order, thus to quell
This band of Christians with one
blow,
Of Syrian and Persian state,
To have our allies all apprised,
And till they come, to wait."

Book II—Canto the Fourth

To this Orcan, agreeing, spake :
 " This prudence I approve ;
The enemy to underrate,
 It can not us behoove.
And this I say, Kerbogga's sad
 Embarrassment to ease,
Who, in free battle, lost his game ;
 (Arslan did, too, if you please ;)
What, what did turn the fatal chance,
 On Antioch's fair field ?
It was that fatal holy lance,
 And prince, with modest shield,
Engraved so fair, with lark in air,
 And ' Nearer, my God, to thee.'
He came, just in the nick of time,
 And turned fair victory,
The Christians' arms to favor.
 He nobly bears his sword ;
I know him both in war and peace,
 His name is Buda's lord,
Against such men, let me assure,
 'Tis well we prudence use,
Else we may rue it bitterly,
 If we its use refuse."
Meleck then made a subtle bow,
 First in Aladdin's court,
Whose counsel oft, with turban doffed,
 Had moved the sublime Porte,
And who, from harem sumptuous,
 With tender smiles made bright,
Of newly wedded wife, had come
 Away to the hall, that night.
He made his subtle bow and spake :
 " Since prudence is the theme,

A Song of Faith

Pray, let your humble servant say,
What prudent to him doth seem.
Behold the wise Tripoli's king,
How he still holds his sway;
He treated with the enemy,
In a most prudent way.
Nor are these Christians all so bad,
As enemies, or as friends;
Orcan, forsooth, has shown to us
What either to us portends;
Why should we fear their friendship
dear?

Our customs those respect,
Who of them, not so bigoted,
See good in every sect.
Such things I heard, and even
more,
In praise of Asia's light,
When once, invited, in their lodge,
I saw the holy rite
Of knowledge high, in wisdom's bath—
The mystic Baphomet,
And heard their words of union,
With all that are good and great.
There high and low did wisdom flow,
In which the souls were bathed,
And washed of superstitions low,
Which sadly long have scathed,
The world of union brotherly,
In happy humanhood,
Because, in Christ's divinity,
They sought beatitude.
My word then is for treating peace,
In which our cause will gain;

Book II—Canto the Fourth

For, as the Crescent waxes full,
The light of the Cross must wane;
Thus over them our sway will be
Greater than theirs o'er us,
And, in the end, this is the end
Which we with them discuss."

Then in the dark divan there rose
A maiden, in grand conceit,
And manner, to insinuate,
Commanding awe complete,
As to the king she bowed, with grace,
And bowed unto the rest,
And spake in words of eloquence,
With force, yet half repressed:
"Aladdin! King of Soldan wise!
Thy wisdom's common sense,
To thee, from where their campfires
rise,
With force has drawn me hence;
For there bleak superstitions,
Which they, forsooth, call faith,
The sway o'er noble bosoms
Of generous heroes hath.
Trust not in truce or treaty;
Their cause is deeply entrenched
In superstitions bristling,
Which are not easily wrenched.
Meleck's advice were good, indeed,
If happ'ly based on truth;
I better know, alas! alas!
I know to mine own ruth!
But few of them are liberal,
And they are not the best;

A Song of Faith

The noblest of them and the brave
Are true to their faith's behest.
Orcan hath mentioned you but one,
And deeds of his great sword;
No mightier hero and more true
There is than Buda's lord.
Such men you can but overcome,
By breaking down their trust,
Thus freeing them from thralling lie,
They on themselves, unjust,
Impose by aspirations high,
Which spring from false belief,
Debarring all life's pleasures thus,
To their and others' grief.
Then forth, O sublime Soldan King!
I'll lead these nightly hours,
To break the Christian's trust and
strength,
By burning down their towers."

She ceased and winged her closing word,
With fire-flashing eyes,
And swayed the hearts of all who heard,
To yield applauding cries.
Aladdin brave his word then gave,
And no one durst gainsay;
In grand conceit, the maiden fair
Completely held the sway.
She armor asked; 'twas given her,
And when 'twas proudly donned,
She forces asked; and they were brought,
Which masterly she conned.
Upon her steed she took the lead
Intently, in the van;

Book II—Canto the Fourth

Her force of foot and cavalry,
Each well-instructed clan,
In given order, followed her;
The foot, ahead of horse,
Intent to burn the towers down
And break the Christians' force.
And when the towers they had reached,
She gave the word to burn,
And on the Christians slumbering,
The foot, with sword to turn;
The horse, to fall in afterward,
And strike, with their surprise,
The Christians who, aroused, in flight,
Or, in defense, might rise.
They to her word, like demons, sprang,
And filled the night, with fears
Of loud, black-clouded flames, and thus
The day, with bitter tears.
The flames, the towers devouring,
And spreading stifling smoke,
Arose and lighted weapons keen,
To deal their murderous stroke.
So keen was breath of stalking death,
So covered was his stroke,
That where one died, in sleep secure,
His neighbor never woke;
And many-handed sword and spear
Glutted the jaws of death;
The soil was quick, with Christians'
blood,
The air, with expiring breath.

“Awake! awake, from sleep secure!
Behold our crumbling tower!

A Song of Faith

Lo, lo, the foe is prying now,
Wherever he may devour!"
Who rides with speed, on damask steed?
Who wakes the slumbering field?
'Tis he, with "Nearer, my God, to thee"
And rising lark, on shield.
The Christians rose from sad repose,
The enemy's horse pressed in;
Black, black the smoke from towers rose;
Loud, loud the battle's din.
The Christians' shrieks, awaking now,
Amid death's gory throes,
From tent to tent th' alarum sent,
To rise from their repose.
In frightened haste, they, mounted,
pressed,
To face the storming foe,
Who—sad! oh, sad! already had
Inflicted harmful woe!
The Christians soon, beneath the moon,
Now stood, in bold array,
And held, though strong, recruiting
long,
The enemy at bay.
These greedy of the vantage ground,
They fancied they had gained,
In numbers, ever coming, for
The questioned victory strained.
Now gaining here, now losing there,
Now rallying again,
So waged they deadly battle hard,
O'er all the lighted plain.
Where one of them, in battle, fell,
Three came, to take his place;

Book II—Canto the Fourth

And where a Christian knight they slay,
They herald the disgrace,
To fill the others with dismay.
But here fair Buda's lord
Defensive and offensive swung
His Balmung's two-edged sword.
Argant, with crest of dragon dressed,
The white-horsed hero spied,
Thus nobly serving cause so good,
And rushed on him and cried:
"Almighty thou must deem thyself;
Here's greater might than thine;
I'll bring thee to thy senses soon;
Come, measure strength with mine!"
But Ladislaus made answer fair:
"What recks thee what I deem?
Not knowing sound and trusty ground,
To thee I may thus seem;
But what I am I'll show thee soon,
Before I never vaunt,
Nor seek unfair advantage, where
Thou dost, my brave Argant!"
They closed in battle thundering,
Their heroes closed around;
And louder than freshets of Dan
Now grew the battle sound.
The hills rebound with thundering
sound,
The holy hills of Zion,
From which the battle seemed to wake
The roaring of Juda's lion.
Nor lance nor shield their use could
yield,
In this close-handed strife,

A Song of Faith

While, in swift strokes and counter
strokes,

The swords were used for life;
To take, to guard, in conflict hard,
In which the other's breath,
By each was felt, as forth it dealt
The burning threat of death.

The towers were to embers burned,
And darkness palled the field;
But still the combat deepened on,
And neither one would yield.

When, by the streaks of morning light,
Fair Buda's lord looked 'round,
He saw alas! in every pass,

The en'my gaining ground;
And, in the broil, the face he saw,
Where lingered his fatal haunt;
This gave his purpose tension strong
And fury against Argant.

Around him sweeping mightily
His Balmung's two-edged blade,
There from his path the dragon's
wrath

He swept, and him there laid
In dust, to which he turned. Then on

He spurred his charger's flanks,
And cheering lent encouragement
To Christians' failing ranks.

He came to where Duke Godfrey,
With word and shining sword,
The rising cheer spread far and near,
From strokes of Buda's lord.

On him the Duke approval,
With smiling countenance, beamed,

Book II—Canto the Fourth

Just as the Day's first leaping rays,
O'er morning hillocks gleamed.

Fair Christiana, from the Mount,
Looked o'er the battle field,
And saw, with eyes of sweet surprise,
That well beloved shield;
As, in the sun, it fairly shone,
And in Duke Godfrey's glance,
She stood transported by the sight,
In war-enhancing trance.
There with his shield he sweeps the
field,
Along the bristling line,
It straightening, where, wavering,
The Christians did decline;
The mightiest of the foes are felled,
By his sword and his men's;
By side-long sweep, he cuts them down,
As, in the forest glens,
The pioneer the field doth clear,
And fells the knotty trees,
His weaker force left stand; of course,
He cuts them down, with ease.
Thus came the lord of Buda fair
To where the brave Orcan
Swept on, with death in every breath,
Leading his knightly clan;
And there, too, was the fierce Arslan,
For bloody revenge athirst
On Christians whom for his Jugirth's
And kingdom's loss he cursed;
And there was Helen fair, in arms,
Who had provoked the raid,

A Song of Faith

And by her word encouraging,
The towers in dust had laid;
All, flushed with thoughts of victory,
And swinging brands of death,
'Neath which a Christian knight, alas!
Went down, at every breath.
These rendered more athirst for gore,
By Helen's encouragements,
The Christians back had driven far,
Into their ranging tents;
Alas! there fell to infidel,
In desecrating spoil,
From Christian's height, his standard
bright,
In this alarming turmoil!
The lark on high there waved, in sky,
Bright with the rising sun,
Where on Orcan fair, Buda's lord,
In desperate press, bore down
And raised the Christian's courage and
The foe brought to a halt,
Back on themselves recoiling.
As waters, in assault,
Adown the rock-reefed river rush,
With all their spoil adrift,
But from one rock recoil with
shock;
That rock receives the swift
And bristling current unremoved,
And heaps the slashing gorge;
The waters coil and turn aside,
Along the wid'ning marge:
So rock-like stood fair Buda's lord;
So whirled the wild onslaught,

Book II—Canto the Fourth

Against the rock; down, in the shock,
The foe was sent; or sought
In sideward jam, a safe retreat;
Ah! ah! the strife was hot,
Between the two and both their men,
Thus, by example, taught.
Anon, aground, the spot around
Grew clear, but dark below,
Where heave the corpses of the slain,
And purple streamlets flow.
Far o'er the field was seen and heard
The lightning flash and crash
Of Balmung's thund'ring strokes; but
these

Orcan, with daring dash
And knightly skill avoided still,
At cost of his own men;
For not a Balmung's stroke was lost,
It sent one to the plain.
Now Buda's lord drew off, to
close

With brave Orcan alone;
No more the blood of common foes
His wrath could now atone;
He knew his brave antagonist,
By him was recognized,
And both as friend and foe, by each,
The other was highly prized.
Orcan his intent well did mark,
And turned, with answering look;
Then flashing crash resounded loud,
From equal strook on strook.
Then to the lord of Buda there,
Obliquely in his eye,

A Song of Faith

Appeared the armored Helen fair,
With passion's look and sigh;
Ah! ah! my lord of Buda fair!
What tension to thee gave once,
At that thou now relaxest there?
Alas! yes, for the nonce!
Unkind! unkind! the lance doth find
Its way with deafening sound;
Orcan, with thrust far from his bust,
Sends Buda's lord to the ground.
At this, just like a star that shoots
Into dark clouds, in sky,
So did fair Christiana down
The azure hill-side fly
Into the cloud of battle loud;
There, at his side, she kneels
And, with moist brow o'ershadowing,
Her bridegroom's breathing feels.
When Lothar saw, and Lythke,
And every Buda's knight,
The lord of Buda fallen thus,
Their soul was fired by the sight;
And when they Christiana saw,
The fire, by hurricane,
Was blown against the enemy,
And, o'er the battle plain,
Was heard the cry of victory:
"The Virgin's come to our aid;"
And back, back fell the enemy,
On, on the Christians swayed,
Until the gates of Jerusalem
Came down the armies between,
'Gainst which brave Lothar yet did break
His lance, for the battle keen.

Book II—Canto the Fourth

Fair Ladislaus, unconscious,
With care, was borne away,
And in his tent, attended by
Fair Christiana he lay;
He oped his eyes and her beheld,
And closed them, in a dream;
Like rising high, in peaceful sky,
He to himself did seem.
He spake: "Oh! joy, what do I see?
My love, and is this Heaven?
And shall there, in eternity,
Such joy to me be given?"
"Yes, yes," said she, "to you and me,
Here, in this life is given
Such hallowed joy, without alloy,
Foretaste of yonder Heaven."
Nor could she any further speak,
For he then oped his eyes;
She looked in his, and he in hers,
And longing and surprise
Were quenched by warm and quick embrace;
He drew here to his breast,
And, from assurance, he drank strength,
While she, in it, found rest.

Book III
From Darkness to Light

Book III—Canto the First

A long, long drought, in Salem's
land,
The arid air and earth
For rain made sigh from clouds so high,
In daily enduring death.
Then pestilence, her orgies sad,
And awful began to hold,
Which caused the strong to tremble,
Made pallid the most bold.
Bare Death and stark, in light and dark,
Stalked through the frightened camp,
By day, in scorching sunbeam's ray,
By night, by light of lamp,
And spread around the mournful sound
Of prayer and dismal cries.
Which rose from terror stricken hearts,
Against the brazen skies.
Repentance then was ordered,
In one grand service divine,
If happily the will of Heaven
They might to their aid incline;
But still on, daily growing worse,
The dreadful drought endured;
Their prayers dry, as was the sky,
No drop of dew secured.

High on the mount of Olivet,
The poet Gabriel's tent
Enclosed a scene of tempered joy,
In sorrow, with which it blent;

A Song of Faith

For Ladislaus, recovering,
Fair Christiana her lord
Regaled, with tokens of her
 care,
And many a tender word.
To which the bard attuned his lyre,
To sing of love's strong sway,
How it doth light, with service bright,
The dark of the darkest day.
And while the poet sang his song,
They rose and looked around,
And, lo! a cloud of promise full,
With loud, refreshing sound,
Passed o'er the mount of Olivet,
And softened the brazen sky,
Distilling dew the welkin through,
With comfort from on high.
Then poured the rain, with might and
 main,
Down on the famished earth,
Which, in the thunder's rolling strain,
Her passive joy breathed forth.
But soon it was rejoicing strong
Of every living thing,
Of man and beast and bird of song,
And fowl of heavier wing;
All feel the new life springing,
As from the heavens it pours,
And on it bounds, in joyful sounds,
As on the torrent roars.
All felt, that day, th' equality
Of sorrow and of joy,
When God, to chasten and console,
His power doth employ;

Book III—Canto the First

For peasant, page and chieftain sage
All stood on equal plain,
With joy supreme, that God to them
Had sent refreshing rain.
Such joy, in sorrow born, unites
The hearts, in serving love;
The strong then gather for the weak
Refreshment, from above.
So Christiana bears, in love,
O'erflowing cups to her lord,
With precious showers from Above,
And many a thankful word.
This work of love admiring,
The bard reflecting stood,
And spake with deepest utterance
Of hearty gratitude:
“ 'Tis thus that God from misery
Us sinful mortals lifts,
By love's unwearied ministry,
In use of His fair gifts.
He pours His showers from Above,
And those who them enjoy,
He fills with love, as ministers
Of grace them to employ.
God, in His Gospel, gave His Son,
To preach to all the world,
And men His Spirit breathing on,
Soon, soon it was unfurled.
In all the ends of all the earth,
By ministry of love,
For nothing else could give to men
Such power, as from above.
When love its ministry doth cease,
And, in the heart of man,

A Song of Faith

Proud lordship the dominion hath,
The Gospel is under ban."

Now, deeply stirred by every word,
Fair Christiana said:
"O, worthy bard! thy words have power,
For by their mighty aid,
We feel the power of love that brings
God's gracious presence down,
And lo, His blessings bountiful
Are scattered all around!
Our hearts are filled with joy, to trust
God's words of promise told,
Which yet, for future opening,
Untold disbursements hold."
And then the lord of Buda spake:
"Thy song is no empty din;
Thy words come forth with light and
power,
From goodly fount within.
Where didst thou drink such knowledge,
O worthy bard, divine?
Come grasp this humble hand of mine,
In that warm hand of thine!"
The bard was solemn, just like one
Whose thoughts are far away,
Upon the hillocks of fair dawn,
Where clouds with sunbeams play.
Then, as by sudden rapture borne
O'er yawning depths and heights,
His countenance, to answer formed,
Like one whom it delights:
"The secret of my knowledge,
For which God's grace I praise,

Book III—Canto the First

Is found in my life's narrow woof,
E'en from my youthful days.
Those days were happy, as the streams
Which, from Himalaya's slopes,
To Jumna's bed disporting run,
In play with heliotropes.
'Twas on that river's borders green
My parents tilled the soil
Of rugged land, the streams between,
With daily enduring toil.
Of four sons I the youngest was,
Entwined were sisters three,
Like finer through the coarser threads,
And two came after me.
I was my parent's Benjamin,
Loved by my brothers all,
Nor did, but tender kindnesses
Those happy days befall.
To books and holy offices
My future was declared,
For which, by careful tutors wise,
I early was prepared.
I read, and read, with restless head,
And roamed the hills and dales
And thoughts arose, from heart's repose,
As in the groves, the gales.
Some seemed to come, from heights unknown
With swayings mystic and grand,
Like winds which heave the forest's
breast,
And make the fronds expand.
Some seemed to come up from below,
With wild, disturbing force,

A Song of Faith

Like winds which stir the fallen leaves,
In gusty, whirling course.
Sometimes, as in a tempest wild,
Both kinds together did meet,
And cause my heart, in burning
smart,
With dark forbodings to beat.
I hastened to my tutors wise,
Confessing my troubled mind,
And all their counsels to obey,
I honestly was inclined.
They strict devotions laid on me,
And arduous works to do,
Of self denial sore; thus would
Fair peace to me accrue.
With painful scruples, I obeyed,
And with the firm resolve,
To make clear path of duties hard,
On devotee to devolve.
I worshiped then the fabled Brahm,
Whom high o'er earthly things,
In dismal distance I did dream,
More stern than earthly kings.
I to the sun of morning looked,
And raised, deep from my soul,
The burden of my longing all,
And oped it, like a scroll,
To piercing rays, on which I gazed,
Until my flowing eyes
Saw naught, through mist of blinding
tears,
But rainbows, in the skies.
And dark Vishnu I worshiped, too,
Whom nearer to man I deemed;

Book III—Canto the First

But thus, alas! it came to pass,
He more degraded seemed.
He was believed man to redeem,
But not from sin forsooth,
But rather, from a purpose right,
And from the power of truth.
For, in his own biography,
Both truth and righteousness
Were blotted out by sin and doubt,
In darkness shadowless.
Into this darkness shadowless
I called, with painful awe,
The thousand names, of dark Vishnu,
His stolid ear to draw.
I worshiped him, with bitter fear,
His profane wrath to appease,
In his renowned Avatars ten,
Him surely thus to please.
As Fish, as Boar, as Tortoise,
As Centaur, Dwarf, and Horse,
As Rama, thrice, and Buddha—
All incarnations coarse
Of might profane and purpose vain,
In flesh of beast and man,
I worshiped him by day and night,
As only devotee can.
And Krishna lewd my worship sued,
A god in sport with maids,
Who raped and thieved, as was believed,
In his sublunar raids.
I did revere him, as most near,
Of all the divine to men;
I hoped, that in his worship,
Assurance I might gain,

A Song of Faith

That, in all human frailness,
There yet is something divine,
And thus might climb unto the heights,
For which my soul did pine.
Alas! all the divine was reft
Of what could make it so,
And, Brahm in dismal distance left,
I groped in darkness below!
For all my worship hollow was,
Not for devotion's lack,
Which sure was whole, with all my soul,
Nor did my purpose slack,
But for the lack of purity
And holiness divine,
And ransom for my soul, which might
My God to me incline.
Not finding peace in worship,
I was advised to read
The books the holy sages wrote,
They surely to peace would lead;
Deep, deep to look in Nature's book,
By science led and art,
Thus would expanse of thought enhance
The proud repose of heart.
These books, indeed, much goodness
showed,
But all, in human light,
That to corruption what they taught,
Appeared, like gems most bright.
Of God they banished every thought,
As idle and in vain;
Far in some time and mystic clime,
A union with Brahm might gain
The soul, in transmigrations long,
If true to virtue's power;

Book III—Canto the First

Thus throwing darkness shadowless
O'er all this present hour!
But in this darkness, I did seek
For my poor soul some good,
And lost all hope, in seeking it;
Then terrible lassitude
My powers seized. To Krishna
blithe,
In dalliance with his maids,
I refuge took, since love now, too,
Did proffer to me her aids.
I loved the whole-souled love of youth,
With heart impatient of ruth,
In love now seeking what it never
Had found in pursuit of truth.
I loved a maiden, the beautiful
Of all the country around,
Whose presence to me was magic
Which quivered along the sound
Of Zella, her name, as certainly,
And with as magic a spell,
As lightning does with thunder,
Resounding in the dell.
And she loved me, I knew it;
Her love responded to mine,
As mine to hers, symphonic,
On chords which did entwine
Our hearts, in every look of eye,
And pressure of the hand,
And tone of voice, which meant much
more
Than others could understand.
Sweet were the sounds of woodland-
grounds,
The gales in the trees no more

A Song of Faith

Disturbed my rest of soul so blest,
As oft they had done before,
But were accordant measures played
To jubilant songs of love,
While winds from shore of Malay bore
The fragrance of the clove.
How sweet then were the days of spring,
Full-fledged and all aglow
With joys, which seemed in bud to gleam,
Beneath love's promising bow,
Like buds of mangoes opening
Among the rich ripe fruit,
Presaging fruitage ever new,
Such as all seasons to suit.
When thus on Jumna's banks of green,
My heart o'erflowed with joy,
My worship flowed, deep and serene,
In Krishna's blithe employ.
My joys, my hopes and all my life
Divine and pleasing to God
I deemed, since Krishna had himself
Thus walked this earthly sod.
Myself I so ennobled felt,
And so divinified,
That all gross things of common life
My heart no more could abide;
And also all relationships
And duties to humankind
Seemed my employment far beneath,
From love's enjoyment refined.
Not long, not long, for rapids come,
Love's bark is driven dry;
A Delhi merchant, on his raids,
Pitches pavilion nigh

Book III—Canto the First

The modest home of Zella mine
And wins her, with his gold
And promise of a happy life,
In use of wealth untold.
'Neath willows dark my shattered bark
Now drooping, drooping lay,
And, oh! the sun, which fair had shone,
Of love, in life's high day,
To blood was turned, as down it burned
And turned my love to rage;
Against the merchant I resolved
Revengeful war to wage.
A man of God had often told
Me what I should believe,
The Gospel of a Saviour dear,
Whose word I did receive
Into a heart, all torn apart
By human love and hate;
So on I went, in anger bent,
Revengeful lust to sate.
My brothers I together called,
And Zella's brothers three,
And filled them with the fire of hate
That was aflame in me.
In them I fanned it with the hope
Of great reward of spoil;
The Delhi merchant's stores of wealth
Would free them from all toil.
Soon, soon all ready for the raid,
And armed from head to foot,
We mounted well and rode pell mell
In deathly daring pursuit.
We tracked the merchant, on his way,
And, in three days, o'ertook

A Song of Faith

Him in the woods, and bloody fray
From stilly nature shook.
Upon the merchant's force we bound,
Like shepherds, robbed of lamb,
Bound on a pack of hungry wolves;
They count not numbers, in calm
Disposal of their means and force,
But plunge into the fray,
And find, too late for safe retreat,
The too great pack at bay:
So we o'erwhelming numbers fought;
My brothers fled or slain,
Alone I fought my enemy
And struggled all in vain.
Revenge, revenge my burning heart
And powers did sustain,
To fight of right, or life, or might,
In cold and daring disdain.
I fought, till wounded and agore,
My strength was overcome;
With mind revengeful evermore,
My body's limbs fell numb.
I sank and lo, in sinking, saw
Distinctly, in the press,
My Zella, with her eyes on me,
Bespeaking sad distress;
Her, her I saw a poniard draw
So subtle and so bright,
With which in heart from me to part,
As from my eyes, the light."

Book III—Canto the Second

‘TWAS now the calm of evening,
The night was closing around,
With forms of dreams and reveries,
In which it doth abound.
And Gabriel looked around him,
And saw the shades of night,
And said: “ ’Twas thus, when down I
sank,
And Zella, from my sight.
The shades of dreams, in double night,
Closed in on the world and me,
As down I sank, from world of sight
And of reality,
Into the mystic land of dreams.
There, in revengeful course,
My mind went on to seek the means,
With unencumbered force.
I gathered wealth and riches now,
In piles of mighty gold,
And streams of fortune flowed
to me,
By luck and commerce bold.
My deals are made unsparingly
Of others’ wealth or weal;
Success doth press on daringly,
Nor, but for myself to feel.
The Delhi merchant, with his sort,
My power of commerce felt,

A Song of Faith

As in the marts I had my sport,
And daring deals I dealt.
All opposition went adrift,
To ruin, in my course;
My swelling stream of fortune swift
Engulfed them, in the bourse,
As river doth the streamlet.
My wealth I turned to power,
And power again to wealth I turned,
Increasing every hour.
My power grew, and kingdoms vast
Began to serve my will;
And heartless wealth purloined, with
stealth,
My heart from others' ill.
They cringed to me most servilely,
For which advantage scant,
To bait them on, I'd yield to them,
By laws, with tyranny rant.
My Zella answered to my call,
As e'er she had done before,
In touch with my touch sensible,
As e'er I had hoped of yore.
I found the end of my desires,
And found, I had not found;
For all my wishes, bauble-like,
When realized, fell to the ground;
For all my finding was but loss,
And ever ceased to abound
The joy, in its enjoyment.
Thus onward I was spurred,
To seek, to seek yet other realms,
Beyond what man had heard.
I to the clouds of heaven climbed,
And there the power sought out,

Book III—Canto the Second

And hidden spring of lightning,
And brought it down and about,
To serve my growing commerce.
I water, then, and fire,
With iron, yoked to snorting team
And hitched to iron tire,
To serve my glory and my wealth,
To bring, from far and near,
The wealth of mind, and every kind,
To human hearts so dear.
Thus was I in the act to grasp
More than a royal throne,
When all, all crumbled from my
clasp,
And left me, in pangs, alone.
I was awake, in forest glen,
The dead were lying around,
While through the trees the morning sun
Sent bounding beams to the ground.
There lay two brothers—one of hers,
Not few of the merchant's men,
But he and she—I cared no more—
Had disappeared from the glen.
The stillness of death was over all,
The pangs of death, in my limbs,
The waters of death, deep from my soul
O'erflowed its tender brims.
And sinking down again, I wished,
Oh! that the power of death
Might ease my lot of this so hot
And painfully weary breath!
I prayed the sun whose rising beams
Were leaping among the trees,
For light, to cool my burning soul;
No power was there to ease.

A Song of Faith

I stared around upon the ground,
And saw, in the dancing rays,
But quivering breath of life and death,
As in a murky haze.
At this a face bent over me,
Compassionate, meek and mild,
With comfort kind of man to man,
In sweetness of a child.
It was that man of God I saw,
Whose great benevolence
My eyes now filled, and soul now stilled
With trustful confidence.
He took me up and carried me
Into his cozy cot,
Surrounded by sweet fields and meads,
A bright and cosy spot.
He spake to me true comfort strong,
Of God, the Father's love,
Who had created me to life,
And looked on me from above.
He spake to me of righteousness
And holiness of the Lord,
Revealed from Heaven to the world,
In His inspired word.
He showed me, then, how sin had hurt
All men, in body and soul,
And Christ, the Son of God, had borne
Our sins, to make us whole.
He to me of the Spirit spake,
Who comes to us by faith
In Christ and His atoning blood,
And brings us life, from death;
We have but to submit our hearts,
In sorrow for our sin,

Book III—Canto the Second

And with God's love and grace of Christ,
By faith, He'd enter in.
The truth God's nearness brought to
me,
I saw that He was mine;
And from the depth of soul I prayed:
'O God, let me be Thine!'
With water he baptized me then,
And, for my name of Zell,
He gave me now, a new-born man,
The name of Gabriel.
Together, in the forest glen,
We buried the dead of the past,
And, in a living future, thence
The lines of my life were cast."

Whilst thus the bard his story told,
Fair Christiana, in tears
Of contemplative attention heard,
With sympathetic ears.
And, almost interrupting, said:
"Oh, bless the Lord for the tie
Which binds our souls in union sweet,
New-born of God on high!"
"Ah! yes," the bard then answered,
"The elect of God, in light
Of fellowship of faith and love,
A strong tie doth unite.
From age to age the stream doth flow,
Of Spirit's fellowship;
Kept pure by Christ's atoning blood,
Our longing souls we dip
In God, our heavenly Father's love,
With praise on every lip."

A Song of Faith

Then Ladislaus, in wonderment:
 " I see the Light of the Word!
I felt, I felt its warmth and power,
 Which with it doth accord,
More than I saw the Light itself;
 But now I see its rays,
As it doth break through darkness thick,
 And wakes to joy and praise.
I always thought that pious priests,
 Or those who are held to be,
Who sit in the Apostle's place
 And Peter's authority,
Must know and teach what to believe—
 The way, the truth, the Light;
But now I see their work has been,
 To keep it from my sight.
Its power not so; they never could;
 And now the light I behold;
In God's clear word it shines alone—
 In Christ alone, as of old."
When Ladislaus had spoken thus,
 Fair Christiana arose,
And took his hand and warmly did
 It to her bosom close.
A rapture of love came over them,
 In which, at once, they said:
" Oh! bless the word, and bless the Lord,
 Of love the Fountain-head!"
Then Christiana did rehearse,
 How love alone had drawn
Her from her far, far distant home,
 That bleak autumnal morn;
How to the church, in forest-dale,
 By Providence led, she came,

Book III—Canto the Second

And heard the martyred Stephan
The light of the word proclaim;
How there she witnessed martyrs' blood,
By powers of darkness, flow,
And heard the cry of innocents
Beneath the deadly blow;
How she, with Stephan, then was bound
And borne to prison away,
From which he only unto death,
Was led to the light of day;
How she, a captive, taken then,
Was carried o'er the waves,
By power which presumes to be
The only power that saves;
This monster was Mauhassim called,
But from it she was freed;
How then away, away, away,
She did to Salem speed.
Now to the lord of Buda came
The turn to embrace his bride;
In love's flow inexpressible,
They lingered side by side.
The bard, lest he might hinder now
This heavenly poetry,
In silence low, withdrew and so
It flows to eternity.
But, as it were, high on the banks
Of poetry he sat,
While down below the raptured two
With dew of its stream were wet;
And thus they slept their balmy sleep,
While he, on wings of thought,
The watches of the night did keep,
To him with wonders fraught.

A Song of Faith

The flowing sounds, with music's bounds,
Delight his inner ear,
As, from the height, his Muse's flight
Bears on the willing seer.
He sees the truth, with blessings bright,
Break through the powers of night;
He sees the bonds of tyranny
Fall by the power of Light;
He sees, in distance, farther on,
The New rise from the Old,
And all the means the mind hath won,
There freedom serve most bold;
And there he sees, from ruins, rise
The bride of humanity,
With stars in tresses streaming far,
And kiss the bride of the sky.

Book III—Canto the Third

FROM dawn the day, with heaven's
ray,
To active life arose,
And waked, from Christians' hearts and
hands,
Preparing against their foes,
The sound of work, and prayer loud;
The sun, in ascending course,
Increased the sound of work around,
In volume, light and force.
The camp with labor was alive,
Which stirred the generous heart
Of Ladislaus, whose purpose rose,
To bear with them his part.
But by his bride, so full of care,
Detained, for his health, he said:
"God speed the work of Christian men,
And grant our arms His aid!
May God cast down the Crescent,
In all this holy land!
And may the Cross, replanted,
And spreading its light, here stand,
Where God Himself did plant it,
For light and life of the world,
That thus again, from Zion's height,
Its glory be unfurled!
Methought erstwhile the world was cold,
And hither, for warmth of love,

A Song of Faith

I came, where God did shower it
Upon the Cross, from Above;
But now methinks the world is dark,
And how I long for light
Anew to break, from Zion's height,
With pristine glory bright!"

"Alack!" said Christiana fair,
"And shall it, shall it be?
And shall this war such fruitage bear?
Praise God, in eternity!"

The bard, deep sighing, answered her:
"God's means are all His own;
But we His faithful promise have,
His light shall shine, as it shone."

Then Christiana prayed aloud:
"Oh! hasten the time, good Lord!
Oh! thy poor Zion is sighing, sighing,
For freedom of thy word!
O, worthy bard, sing Liberty!
Alas! I saw the cost!
I heard the voice of martyrs die;
Not thus shall thine be lost,
But wings shall to the former give,
To spread the living seed
Of everlasting Gospel light,
To rise, from Winter freed!"

"What then, what then," said Buda's
lord,
"What shall our Crusade boot?
Shall one not lose all courage so,
To follow its pursuit?"

The bard with smile then answered him:
"Take courage, my good knight!

Book III—Canto the Third

Although thy knightly exploits here
Free not the Gospel Light,
They still 'gainst wrong do make it
strong,
Increasing the Gospel strength
Which, in God's time, from bondage
long,
To light shall break, at length.
Then, then shall rise, in fairer skies,
The bride of humanity,
With star-decked tresses streaming far,
And kiss the bride of the sky.
So, be thou to thy calling true,
For Christ is ruling the world;
Be true to Him, in humble faith;
Let all thy deeds be pearled
With gems of faith and hope and love,
Firm set in truth unfeigned;
So will thy Christian knighthood
Be glorious and unstained."

Meanwhile, in Christians' camp below,
Fair labor's sound increased;
The harmony of industry,
In plying, never ceased,
With ax, and chisel, saw and plane,
With hammer, adze and maul,
To fit and join the timbers strong,
For towers against the wall.
From forests on far-distant slopes,
These timbers had been brought;
Both prince and lord, with ax and sword,
In ready hand had sought
The places where they stood, and soon
The sounding ax was heard,

A Song of Faith

With answering crash of falling trees;
Then cheerful voices stirred
The still resounding woodland breeze;
Then, with a shout, the trunk
They raised to shoulders; talking on
They walked and never shrunk.
Thus soon again the towers grew,
To heal the enemy's spoil,
Who saw, with feelings of regret,
The Christians' joyful toil.
And Helen's spleen was up, who'd
seen

The cause of her defeat,
A cause which burnt the deeper, too,
Because a rival had beat
Her out of what her heart had sought,
In leading the knightly raid:
Fair Buda's lord, from purpose high,
To love her to persuade.
But now she saw him basking in
The glow of victory,
And in the care and smiles of her,
Whose coming, so suddenly,
Her well-laid plans had baffled.
Her heart, with anger, burned,
Which all 'gainst Christiana fair,
For love of him, she turned.
Outside the walls she wandered
'Mong Christians' tents again,
And did, as stranger drawn to them,
An interest in them feign.
She near the tent of Bela dwelt,
Whose wealth of spoils there drew
To him the knights and ladies fair,
Acquaintances old and new.

Book III—Canto the Third

And Bela, too, was troubled,
The cause of his spleen the same;
It murmured low, in slothful heart,
Which had once felt a flame.
Now how it grew anew, anew,
Since Christiana was near;
To him, in plays of youthful days,
She had, as life, been dear.
So, now the scene on Olivet
To him was burning pain;
And he began his wits to whet,
How he her love might gain.
Thus, in his quest of love's unrest,
With Helen, he was led
Into concertment, and to her
He testingly thus said:
"Didst see how Buda's lord did fall?
Didst see that lady appear,
Despite the storm of battle all,
Her love dispelling fear?
Didst see her cover him with care,
Recalling his bleeding life?
Didst see his men, encouraged then,
With victory crown the strife?"
"Ah! yes, I saw it," Helen said:
"Love? fie! 'twas bigotry!
This also did his men enthuse,
To gain the victory!
'Twas most disgusting bigotry!
They shouted, Mary with us!
In her it was the same! It was,
It was ridiculous!
Ha, ha, ha, ha, how I must laugh!
I saw it?—by dint of my eye

A Song of Faith

It was the charm was broken,
The charm of his bigotry;
By dint of my eye 'twas broken;
He faltered and he fell,
When mine and his together came;
Mine eye had broke the spell!"

When Helen thus had spoken,
Then Bela was more free;
He said: "I Christiana love,
She's dearer than life to me;
She, too, forsooth, in days of youth,
Loved me; as well I know,
Her heart is for enjoyment made,
And not to be trammeled so,
By piety's stern devotion.
If I could win her again,
Her heart in pleasures would expand,
Of wealth without refrain."

Thus far, more to himself he spake:
Then, airing what he thought
Them both might aid, he further said:
"Why, Helen, could we not
Unite our arms and bring to bear
My prowess and thy charms,
To win them to the power of love,
Which piety disarms?
A tournament appointed will
A fit occasion give
To us, propitious for our plan,
We need but to conceive;
Nor is this hard for us to do,
Our means the plan suggest,
How, in a common triumph, we
May then asunder wrest.

Book III—Canto the Third

Let Christiana chosen be,
To crown the victor of arms,
And into play will come that way,
My prowess and thy charms.
With these we sure shall overcome
That lord so strong and stern,
And I, from Christiana's hand,
The victor's crown shall earn.
Then thou the cause of Ladislaus
Canst well espouse; his fall
To recent mishap canst ascribe,
Its power to recall—
The charming power of thine eye;
Thus twice o'ercome by thee,
Much more, much more, more certainly,
He in thy power will be.”
The plan seemed good to her, and he
Went agitating forth;
Just as a bullock, lounging long,
Arising, claws the earth,
And, snorting of his nostrils' strength,
Goes through the browsing herd,
Which, by his free ubiquity,
With vague unrest is stirred;
So Bela through the army went,
With peaceful work astir,
And plied his idle questionings,
Now here, now everywhere,
All for the sport of knightly sort,
In tournament so grand,
In which the crown was to be wound,
By Christiana's hand.
The tournament, the tournament,
Loud was the noise thereof,

A Song of Faith

All hands from work relaxing went
With shouts all noise above:
"All hail, fair Christiana!"
Then hands turned to erect
The benches, in half-circle raised,
With throne for the queen elect,
Whose hand should crown the victor.
They worked with willinger hands,
Than erst, in building, they had given
To duty's fair commands;
Without a lull all work makes dull,
And sport the heart expands.
Then to the mount of Olivet
An embassy was sent,
With Bela, who as orator
To Christiana bent,
In low and smiling courtesy,
Thus to ornate his speech;
And graciously to hear him,
He humbly did beseech.
He said: "O Christiana fair!
Thy name, in shouts of praise,
Is wafted on the wings of song,
And sounds, like those sweet lays
Of our once happy youthful days,
When thy name went along
With every joyful game and sport;
But now it were a wrong,
Not even more to honor it,
Since to us all is known,
What courage, for the holy Cross,
In battle, thou hast shown.
Yes, honor fair is due to thee,
Which honor is mine, to bring,

Book III—Canto the Third

Although thyself canst hear and see,
How all thy praises sing.
Thou, Christiana, art the queen,
The fair crown to bestow
On him, whose arms victorious,
His heart in thy smile may glow.”
Then she away to Ladislaus
Looked, with inquiring eyes,
And read from his advisement,
To her no little surprise;
For she of his recovering,
With great concernment thought,
And dreaded, that he might take part,
And more, that he might not.
However, she prepared herself,
With festal garments fair;
And, with a band of brilliants grand,
Loose bound her flowing hair,
To gorgeous crown upon her head;
A diamond brace, her neck
And, one on each fair wristlet,
Her dainty hands did deck.
Because she was of royal house,
It was behoof, not choice;
Yet did her own fair beauty's charms
In such a garb rejoice.
Her eyes outshone the diamonds,
Her locks, the luster of gold,
And to her tinge, with life aglow,
E'en mother-of-pearl was cold.
As to her features, full of soul,
Naught could embellish them;
A casket fair of virtues rare,
Excelling polished gem,

A Song of Faith

They mirrored forth her soul's great
 worth,
 In heavenly light aglow,
As when the sky doth glorify
 Great Ocean's face below.
Then to the tilt her to escort,
 The worthy bard, she chose,
While slowly Buda's lord, to don
 His armor then arose;
She saw it, and he becked her on,
 With calm and assuring look;
So, from the mount of Olivet,
 Their course to the tilt they took.
In gala there assembled were
 Proud knights and ladies fair,
And when they Christiana saw,
 Their plaudits rent the air.
The ladies, through the rising tiers,
 Their 'kerchiefs waved; their eyes,
Like stars appeared through fleecy
 clouds,
 When sun's eclipsed, in the skies.
So Christiana did eclipse
 Nobility's fair sun,
As she stepped forth, in all her worth,
 To sit upon her throne.
The knights, enlisted for the joust,
 Stood out, on either side,
In horse and armor and in shield,
 Each showing his own pride.
On one side Bela proudly rode,
 Ablaze with silver and gold,
And on the other, Buda's lord,
 In mail of modest mold.

Book III—Canto the Third

And, in a place of prominence,
High in the rising tiers,
Sat Helen fair, in garb most rare,
And full of hopes and fears.
All hearts now for the signal burned;
At last, the sound was heard;
Around the chargers all are turned,
And to the onset spurred.
Their shining armor to the sound
Of thunder lightning lent,
As 'gainst each other they did bound,
In this grand tournament.
With shriveled frown there some went
down,
Away some led, some borne,
While others, with their armor broke,
Withdrew, with looks forlorn.
But now, in single combats bold,
Fair knighthood rose and fell;
The first the knightly prowess told
Of practical Carpinell.
His plaudits loud fell from the cloud
Of waving galaxies,
As he three knights successively
Unhorsed, with gallant ease.
Nor could Bohemund turn the stream
Of praise, with his great might;
To shards, indeed, he turned the shield
Of this applauded knight;
His lance he broke, with forceful
stroke,
That from his hand it fell;
But, for his skill applauded still,
Withdrew fair Carpinell.

A Song of Faith

With mind so crude and feelings
 rude,
 As for his power meant,
Bohemund took the loud applause
 And, flushed, thus onward went.
With Bela he encounter closed,
 For whom now cheers were heard,
For overthrowing two fair knights
 And for disarming a third.
He stoutly down upon him bore,
 With clashing sound of strook
Of both at once; their breeches tore,
 As they in their saddles shook.
The galleries their laughter bray,
 And Bela, stung to the quick,
As mastiff, bitten in the fray,
 Swings 'round, with bristling neck,
So he, with bristling energy,
 And muttering mien, swung 'round,
And, by the force of plunge and thrust,
 Bohemund brought to the ground.
But by this time attention's eyes
 Of all were drawn away,
To where the lord of Buda fair,
 In fairest knightly sway,
Had cleared the broad arena;
 Already unhorsed, disarmed,
Three knights were humbled from the
 field,
 A fourth withdrew unharmed.
But strong attention's tension grew,
 When Tancred, followed, too,
By generous plaudits, in his course,
 On Buda's lord now threw

Book III—Canto the Third

His gallant glance and bantering,
As they together rushed,
Kings stood, and knights and ladies fair
Broke forth in a storm unhushed,
White-winged with 'kerchiefs fluttering.
A quiet pause ensued,
In which the tension of the fray
Held in expectant mood,
Until, Ladislaus victorious,
The roar of applause was loud,
As waters rush, with mighty gush,
From out the breaking cloud.
Now Buda's lord and Bela
Alone were on the field,
Each gallantly arranging
His lance, his sword and shield;
While in the heart of Helen start
The strings of tension strong,
As on the movements of the two
Is fixed their tender thong.
Her hope and fear are balancing,
Which, in the quest of love,
With their uncertain trembling,
To sudden action move.
So Helen waves her 'kerchief,
And claps her nervous hands;
From her it spreads contagious,
As, on the water, expands
The circle, from the spider's breath;
The noise increasing, as when
A whirlwind sudden starts amain
And breaks through forest glen.
But steady with fair purpose was
The eye of Buda's lord,

A Song of Faith

Despite, that on him Helen's eye
Was fixed, with tangling cord
Of love's perplexed intensity;
He felt it, in his heart,
By intuition of the mind,
With eyes from her apart.
He felt the power embarrassing,
And Helen knew it, too;
While Bela bold his glances cold
Around him loosely threw.
The pallor he for weakness took,
Which Buda's lord did show,
And felt, in sort, he'd have the sport,
Him soon to overthrow.
So felt the people witnessing,
And their excitement hushed;
Fair Christiana trembled pale
And Helen highly flushed.
The two then on each other,
With different mien, bear down;
Fair Buda's lord, with pale, calm smile,
Bela, with bantering frown.
But soon his shield is thrown afieid,
And falls flat to the ground;
His lance, upon fair Buda's shield,
From his strong hand is wound;
All done, in such a knightly way,
That soon the people had broke
Forth, in decisive plaudits loud,
When Bela his saber took,
And Buda's lord, in fair display,
Threw shield and lance away,
And o'er the skies of beaming eyes
Approval's light did play.

Book III—Canto the Third

So, both, in its reflection calm,
High whirled their glittering blades;
Then, by the light of Balmung bright,
Were chased from his face, the shades
Of lingering pallor. Gallantly
Fair Buda's lord, with strokes,
Stripped Bela of his sword and mail,
As lightning strips the oaks.
His hand to Bela he extends,
Who takes it, in burning shame;
And feels the burning all the more,
As having himself to blame.
Kings stood, and knights and ladies fair
Broke forth, in a storm unhushed,
White-winged with 'kerchiefs fluttering;
And Christiana blushed,
As she on the brow of Buda's lord
Asserted the olive crown,
Which she with her fair hand had
wreathed,
And brought from the mountain down.

Book III—Canto the Fourth

DUKE GODFREY, chief of red-
crossed knights,
A solemn council called,
At dead of night, in armor bright,
How they Jerusalem walled,
Might early storm, in strength of morn;
He said: "Though Christ with us
Doth fight, yet must we use our arms,
To make them victorious.
So, let's together counsel take,
That, with the morning light,
We so may ope, as we may hope,
Our soon victorious fight."
He spake, and deep the movement was,
Which, in the council profound,
Did rush through knightly bosoms
strong
And deeply sound around,
As when the forces of the sky,
Deep from the sea, the surf
Roll up, in breakers, strandingly
Against the rock-ribbed turf.
The counsel went harmoniously,
The answer of all, the same:
"Duke Godfrey shall our leader be,
In Jesus' mighty name."
Then Godfrey friendly muster held,
Instructing all, how they

Book III—Canto the Fourth

Should stand and strive for victory
Much more than him to obey.
“Our one great aim is victory,
To that my leading must serve;
Hold that in constant view,” said he,
“Let never an effort swerve!
Then each and all together
Fair victory will crown,
Within our hope’s fair stronghold,
With equal joy and renown.
We’ll now, by night, against the wall
Our mighty towers push,
To right and left; with listless speed
Our labor we will hush.
Our battering rams must service do,
Where gate intersects the wall,
So that we’ll scale, or enter through,
Or make it in ruins fall.
The left high tower Raymund,
The gallant of Toulouse,
With Baldwin, Flanders’ Robert,
And the brave Norman will use,
To frighten back the enemy;
In this, yet Carpinell
And Bela will serve willingly
And make their efforts tell.
The battering rams, between the towers,
Bohemund, with his will,
And Sabran’s William, with his wit,
To life will inspire, until
The gates must fall, with crumbling
wall,
A highway there to make,

A Song of Faith

O'er which to enter Salem fair,
Our hope's stronghold to take.
The tower, on the right, myself,
With prelate Adhemar,
And Buda's lord, and Eustace,
My brother, to holy war
Will make alive, a giant fierce,
With numerous eyes and hands,
Which all, for victory alone,
One mind and heart commands."

Thus every one his place was shown;
Then hasten all away,
With preparation's careful work,
To turn the night to day.
They first with timbers lay a track,
Then onto rollers prize
The mighty structures, with their tops
High-waving, in the skies,
The sable curtains of the night;
Then on the towers they push,
From roller onto roller laid;
The work with speed they rush.
And heavy soon, beneath the moon,
The curtains of the night
In stillness hung, so lately swung
By knights' propelling might;
Soon stood the towers threatening
The walls of Jerusalem,
The enemy asleep secure
Of danger threatening them;
Now did each Christian hero brave
Himself and his men prepare,
His catapults, his archer-clans,
His arms, in burnished glare;

Book III—Canto the Fourth

And ready for an early siege
Great rocks and shafts, in heaps,
Were piled, and set the strong machine,
From which the missile leaps.

When now the heralds of the day
Out from the glowing East,
O'er morning hillocks far away,
By Adhemar, at least,
Were seen to wave their beaming
crests,

He, by Godfrey's consent,
To matins called the Christian band,
And to the sacrament.
In grand procession on they come,
And loud and mingled pray'r,
With incense, chants and tuneful songs,
Arising fills the air.
And mixed, too, with the morning-mist,
Which pure light can not bear,
The air received it, both of faith
And superstition's prayer.

How be it, then fair Buda's lord,
With Christiana, his bride,
And Gabriel, the singing bard,
Preferred, apart and aside
From this uncertain fellowship,
Their supplications to make,
So, to the mount of Olivet
They did themselves betake.
There, in the light of Gospel pure,
Their souls in prayer they bowed,
Confessed their sins, for mercy prayed,
And new obedience vowed.

A Song of Faith

To God they prayed for blessings sure,
And furtherance of the cause,
For Jesus' holy sake alone,
Whose followers bear the cross,
And as their prayer did unite
With that of the army below,
It chimed but with the pray'r of faith,
And in the light aglow.
This, in his prayer, Gabriel,
To wing the words he prayed,
Expressed, in his assurance strong,
As thus he closing said:
"O Lord! the light, in darkness shines,
Darkness which now has sway
And uses light's fair livery
To serve the darkness of day;
But still the light, in humblest hearts,
Thee glorifies alone,
And prayers of undying faith
Arise to thy great throne.
With them alone our hearts are one,
In humble prayer and praise,
And for the light's great cause do we
Our supplications raise.
Whate'er there be of light on earth,
It's on the Christians' side;
Do thou its precious course, O Lord!
To glorious victory guide!"
He ceased, and, lo! on Salem's walls,
The enemy stood amazed,
As, in the light of Day-star's might,
They on the towers gazed,
And heard the sound of prayer loud,
And saw the Cross in the light,

Book III—Canto the Fourth

The Christian army under it,
All ready for the fight.
Then loud they sounded the alarm,
And to the walls there poured
Bright armored knights and archer-clans,
And loud fair Salem roared
With preparations for the fight,
In placing machines of war;
And heaping missiles for their use
Were brought from near and far.
Then Godfrey called to Christian
knights:
“Now for the walls of Zion!”
This shout all others smothered, like
The roaring of a lion.
With it they rushed to battle hard,
Each one to his own post,
Received by showers of missiles poured,
From all the Saracen host.
Down from the mount of Olivet,
Fair Buda's lord to the fray,
With Christiana's tears awet,
But boldly rushed away.
He left her looking on the cloud,
With its severe turmoil
Of battle sudden, increasing, loud,
It made her soul recoil.
The air was full of deathly darts,
Sent winged with curses loud;
Her heart was full of trembling smarts,
As into this rank cloud
She saw fair Buda's lord rush on,
And pass through, like a flash,

A Song of Faith

And up the tower ascend on high,
Where Godfrey the battle's crash
With wit and courage calm did ply.
With order and steady now
The opposing hosts defend their posts,
With eager and earnest brow.
Bohemund works his forces well,
On ground against the wall,
The archers covering him with clouds;
High on the bridges, let fall
Upon the wall, from towers nigh,
Fair knights, with sword and shield,
Attack defending Saracens;
Both strive and do not yield.

The Saracens down on Christians
Throw rocks and burning brands,
And guard the wall from bridge-attack,
With firm and steady hands.
Offensive, too, they now advance,
With force, the towers to storm;
And up from within their sturdiest men
Upon the bridges swarm.
But, as firm rocks the river turn
Unto a waterfall,
So did the Duke and Buda's lord
The Saracens, from the wall,
Advancing, turn precipitate,
While rainbows, from their swords,
Flashed forth the glory of the Cross
Around the two brave lords.
But foes of better metal stood
Against those on the left;
There fought Orcan and brave Haroun,
So late of his father reft.

Book III—Canto the Fourth

They fought with purpose desperate;
Orcan was steady, led on
By knowledge of Christian knighthood;
Haroun, Argantes' son,
With bitter revenge was burning.
They pressed fair Raymund hard,
And Baldwin and the Roberts two
But able were to retard
The Saracen's onward pressure.
While backward they were pressed,
Though over the bridge's balustrade
They many a turban cast.
There fell the Norman Robert brave,
And loud blasphemous cries
Of victory the welkin clave.
But Godfrey's ears and eyes
Took in the course of all events,
And to Ladislaus he said:
"Now haste thee to the other tower,
Methinks they need thy aid."
Like quiver winged from cross-bow's
thong,
So Buda's lord, from the bridge,
And down through the tower flew away,
Away o'er gutter and ridge.
And, like a thought, a glimpse he caught
Of Helen and Bela with her;
But onward he, and Bela away,
For fear the wrath to incur
Of zeal so true and noble,
Slunk silently to his post;
While Helen, in pale impatience,
Walked through the tents of the host.
Soon Buda's lord, with flashing sword,
Ascends fair Raymund's tower,

A Song of Faith

Just when Orcan and brave Haroun
Displayed victorious power.
The Christian knights were falling,
Some dead, and others back.
Thus Carpinell had fallen,
In bold and courageous attack.
He had repulsed the enemy,
With strong and dextrous hand,
And raised in others courage new,
To follow his high command.
Alas! too closely did they press,
In following his assault,
Thus hemming his hand's fearlessness,
A sad, though well-meant fault!
Thus one whose skill and tempered will
Can meet the enemy's ends,
Must fall, alas! by well-meant fault,
By fault of his own friends!
They bore him to the tower back,
And there agore he lay,
With Norman Robert, in a heap
Of others fallen that day;
Athwart the tower's opening,
They formed a sad rampart
Which filled the Christians with dismay,
The foe, with cheerful heart.
Thus stood despair 'gainst courage high,
High courage against despair,
When Buda's lord, with flashing sword,
Looked on the corpses there.
Orcan to him spake proudly:
"Ha! look and tremble, my lord!
My prowess erst hast felt, forsooth,
Now see the work of my sword!"

Book III—Canto the Fourth

Here no fair dame shall thee recall,
When heaped there, in that pile,
My hand again shall have thee lain,
As on the field erstwhile.”
And blushing most fair Buda's lord
Looked at Orcan and spake:
“Boast not, my brave Orcan, boast not!
To give thee a chance, we'll take
Away this ghastly rampart here;
The dead, in peace, shall rest;
Fair warfare for the living is,
With courage in their breast.
I never boast beforehand,
The issue shall decide;
Methinks we neither have a cause,
The other to deride.”
Whene'er the world an issue sees,
Such characters arise,
Whose power and might break forth to
light
And universal surprise.
So were all eyes of all around,
With overwhelming thought,
Turned to the tower, where the two,
In terrible combat fought.
And as high powers to high emprise.
E'er ample room do lend,
So fought the two a duel true,
Unhemmed by foe or friend.
All unaware of the honor fair,
Aware, but of their work,
Each met each stroke with equal
stroke,
And dire intent did lurk,

A Song of Faith

In every movement's spring and aim;
They felt the noble breath
Each of the other, in the strain,
To strike it down in death.
So clothed with skill their movements
were,
They to all eyes appeared
To move in spheres of radiant air,
Each, with his sphere unsheared.
They met each other's lightning
With deepening thunder's broil;
And flashes from their weapons but
In clashing did recoil.
But, lo! his Balmung swinging high,
A circle in the air
Fair Buda's lord, with it, did mark;
It flashed in turning there;
It leaped, as leaps the lightning
From towering cloud to cloud,
Down on the head of brave Orcan,
With deafening thunder loud.
Orcan upon his knees sank down,
And breathed: "The Cross hath won;
O, Jesus! let thy blood once shed,
For all my sins atone!"
While Buda's lord admiring stood,
Light's power, in display
Of its almightiness to save,
The Christians rushed to the fray.
They drove the enemy from the
tower;
Haroun still stood at bay,
In bitterness, till Bela's hand
Him sent precipitate,

Book III—Canto the Fourth

With dark, dark frown, to darkness
down;

To him 'twas dark, dark fate.

Now Christiana and the bard

Came down to the Christian host,
With cups of living water clear,

To strengthen them at their post.

First to brave Godfrey, as beseeemed,

And then to her longing lord

She poured the pearling liquid forth,

Which sparkled with her word.

The bard it into measures turned,

And made it flow along

To all the throng who for it burned,

Like words of a cheering song.

And, like the words of song it did,

Within their hearts distill

New strength for thought and high em-
prise,

With joy of triumphant will.

Each one resolved on victory,

Back to his post then went,

And panic and confusion loud

Into the foe they sent.

Fair Raymund must be mentioned
here;

Encouraged by Buda's lord,

He drove the foe before him,

With wonders of his sword.

Arslan, to check his onward march,

Against him fiercely flew;

But all in vain, for Christians now

All in their way o'erthrew

A Song of Faith

Bohemund and Sir William

The battering rams, with force,
Against the wall and gates well plied,
That sounds were growing hoarse,
In weakening opposition;

The crumbling rocks must fall,
And soon the gates must open wide,
To enter Salem's wall.

Now Lothar and Lythke eagerly
The high wall bravely scaled,
And heard the voice of Salem's king,
Who, in commanding wailed.

For he had seen the brave Arslan,
Who fought the Cross on the left,
O'erthrown by Raymund's red-crossed
hand;

How sad his ranks were reft!
And there he saw Solymon, too,
His trusted hero friend,
Whose wisdom had availed him oft,
The Crescent's reign to defend,
Now struggle in hopeless conflict,
Now falling beneath the blow
Of fair and youthful Eustace,
Down, down to the ground below.

And there he heard the sections,
Beneath him, he heard the wall,
With gates of his fair Salem,

Ah, yes, he heard them fall!
He heard the shouts of victory,
And, oh! the cries of despair!
As winds to the hoary hailstorms,
They are to his hoary hair!

Book III—Canto the Fifth

NOW Lothar and Lythke, hand in
hand,
Congratulatory stood
High on the walls of Jerusalem,
In Christian brotherhood.
They heard the sound of triumph
And victory rushing on,
The wail of the fleeing enemy,
In struggles, beating down.
From wall to wall they pressed them
hard,
And then from nook to nook,
And Lothar and Lythke hastened down,
And part in the storming took.
Now was fair Salem resonant,
With mingled joy and woe;
And Christians, flushed with victory,
Did nothing of mercy show.
Their swords, in wanton slaughter cold,
Defenseless lives demand,
Now wielded by the hand of power,
And not by the bleeding hand.
Men came from scenes of plunder,
Their blood-stained hands all filled
With loot of those whose cries and
groans,
In bloody death, they'd stilled,
And entered fair Religion's shrines,
At Jesus' tomb to kneel,

A Song of Faith

Inflaming, with its memories,
Their not yet sated zeal,
And thousands and tens of thousands
Defenseless fell that day,
The old and young, the weak and strong,
To red-crossed swords a prey.

Now Chistiana, and Buda's lord,
And bard passed on their way,
Unto the shrine of Jesus' tomb,
There in devotion to pray.
Her heart was sore, with grief she bore,
And bled with sympathy
Of love, in the light of Heaven bright,
At what she was called to see.
And all her being clothed in it,
It shone from her mild eyes,
It trembled, in her movements mild,
As when the sun, in the skies,
In passing, looks upon the world,
The same on weal and woe,
But with affection's different mood,
As change the scenes below.
All sheathed their gory weapons,
And followed her to the shrine;
Her radiant beams went forth in streams
Of power and peace divine;
And soon the shrine of Jesus' tomb
With worshipers was filled
All kneeling in devotion's tears,
And by its rapture thrilled.
Duke Godfrey, humblest of them all,
Lay prostrate long and low;

Book III—Canto the Fifth

Beside him and behind him knelt
Brave knights, in row after row;
And Christians of Jerusalem,
Who, 'neath the Crescent's power,
Had sighed so long, in waiting for,
Rejoiced now, in the hour
Of this their great deliverance;
They knelt, with faces raised,
And loud the Lord and red-crossed
knights

For glorious victory praised.
And here knelt Christiana fair,
With Ladislaus, her lord,
And Gabriel, in silence deep,
While, in the light of the Word,
And through the vistas of its hills,
The holy memories flowed
Into her soul, whose faith and love
In pure devotion glowed.
She saw, in holy rapture pure,
The holy, eternal One,
His majesty, in human flesh,
Veiled, like in clouds, the sun,
Go forth from the bright morning's
womb,

In dew of eternal youth,
And walk on earth, with glory high,
And full of grace and truth.
This Light she in the darkness saw,
This Life of the world, in death;
The Light and Life of human kind,
Lo, breathing, expiring breath,
Which He breathed forth for mortal man
To make him live again;

A Song of Faith

By faith in Him to rise with Him,
In life eternal to reign.
All this, at the tomb of Jesus Christ,
O'er Christiana's soul,
In waves of holy rapture pure,
With power divine did roll.

The three then left the Sepulcher,
To Olivet's hill to go;
And passing along, in silence,
Approached the temple; when, lo!
They heard the noise of slaughter wild;
The noise the tale soon told
Of Christians' bloody violence,
In triumph cruel and cold.
Forth from the door a mingled roar,
And with the roar, there came
A surging wave with sword and glave,
Careening their helpless game.
It was the hoary Salem's king
Whom, stretched on a wooden cross,
They pitched, and dragged, his followers
few
Bewailing loud their loss.
Aladdin sadly wailed and groaned:
"O, Allah! thou art God!
Mohammed is thy prophet,
Who, by thy mighty nod,
With armies full of victory,
Extended the Crescent's reign!
Shall we not hold the kingdom
Which he for us did gain?
O, Allah! O, God Almighty!
But Fate is stronger than thou!

Book III—Canto the Fifth

Mohammed is thy prophet,
But where are the faithful now?
Oh! where are now thy faithful?
Oh! Fate is stronger than thou!"
"Oh, horror!" Christiana cried,
"What sights mine eyes behold!
What words of darkness I do hear!
How cold the winds, how cold
They from the hearts of conquerors
And of the conquered blow!
Oh! come let us away, away,
And to our mountain go!"

Away to Olivet they haste,
And there the poet said,
While Christiana silently
Installing attention paid:
"Of darkness I the powers see,
At work in the world to-day,
So that in the heart of Christians,
The Light hath not full sway;
Proud lordship holds dominion,
In darkness enthralls the Light,
And all that's in its service done,
By custom, it makes right.
And Christendom grows darker,
And darker from day to day!
Oh! when will faith this bondage break,
In freedom the Light have sway,
And borne on love's fair pinions,
As erst by Apostles borne,
Break forth with might and blessings
bright,
To souls in night forlorn!"

A Song of Faith

“ Oh! when? ” sighed Christiana fair,
Her thoughts, in reflective flow,
To eddy of emotion deep
And silence, recoiling low,
Fair Buda's lord was troubled,
Most deeply troubled, and said:
“ But we must in the present live!
Must our victorious raid
Be counted vain and useless?
My courage is broken in two;
What truth shall it together bind,
That I my course pursue? ”
“ 'Tis love that hopeth all, in faith,
Enduring every dart;
God's love to man, thy love to both,
Must heal thy wounded heart.
Was't not in love for Christian men,
That their hearts might rejoice,
Ye came, to free hope's stronghold
here,
For faith to raise its voice? ”

Whilst thus the bard was speaking,
From Godfrey a rider came,
In search for Buda's lord, and loud
He called his well-famed name
Throughout the Christian camp
below.
Then, from the mountain hailed,
He turned his steed, and soon its hoofs
Th' acclivity loud flailed.
Approaching, from his steed he spake:
“ Duke Godfrey's soul's distressed;
For news has come from all around
Of Christians sore oppressed,

Book III—Canto the Fifth

And caused by Christian cruelty,
Here, in this holy place,
Inflicted on the conquered foe:
The noise of this disgrace
Hath gone abroad and bruited is,
To rouse the revenge of those
Who everywhere on Christians now
Their cruelty impose."

"Now here already is a call,"
The bard to Ladislaus said,
"A call to exercise thy faith,
And for thy loving aid."

Then he to Christiana looked,
As if, in quest, to say:

"My heart prompts me to service free,
But art thou willing to stay?"

With looks and words she answered him:

"Obey thy generous heart;
For thus it only me becomes,
To bear with thee my part."

Then he: "Not long, my tender bride!
And I shall return again,
And then the joy of happy hearts
Enhanced, by precious pain
Of waiting for each other dear,
Will all the greater be;
The bard will be, my bride, with thee;
Be cheerful and think of me!"

Then down the slope he rode away,
Repairing to his tent;
Her eyes of pray'r and loving care
Him followed, as he went;
His men soon heard his beating sword,
To mount their rested steeds;

A Song of Faith

Her eyes still follow Buda's lord,
As onward he proceeds,
Till ruined walls his cherished form
From tear-veiled sight detract,
And cast his image in her soul;
Then there, as if in fact,
With hand she pressed it to her breast,
While he to the Duke repairs,
Of him instructions to receive,
In his commission's affairs.
Duke Godfrey spake to Ladislaus:
"The cruelty here displayed
By Christian knights who, in high sprites,
So many in death have laid,
Just for their being infidel
Has roused, in our foes,
The bitter spite, us to requite
With like which they impose.
I know thy heart, brave Ladislaus,
Such motives it detests,
And follows, in enlightened course,
Its noble and pure behests.
Both sides to punish, thou wilt know,
And order and peace restore,
To stop this reign of cruelty
Which we so much deplore.
And then, brave lord, still hear me,
What further I have to say;
The Calif, with hordes unnumbered,
From Egypt is on his way,
With oath still burning on his lips,
All holy places to raze,
Which Christian pilgrims hither draw;
Therefore, not many days,

Book III—Canto the Fifth

And we his mighty force must meet,
Must meet at Askalon,
Before his horde's unholy feet
Much room on land have won."
Fair Buda's lord then rode away,
Upon his damask steed;
Well mounted, his knights all followed
In easy and measured speed.
His thoughts were bent on action,
Albeit, anon they broke
Away and sought the fond, fond spot,
Where last to her he spoke.
This weakened not, but stronger made,
His gallant onward course;
Soon, soon to come and take her home,
He pressed, with buoyant force.
Great was the work he found to do,
With great need, to be done;
Where Christians held the reins of
power,
By triumph proud led on,
The Turks they persecuted;
The same the Turks returned,
Where in their hands the power was,
While yet with spite they burned.
Fair Ladislaus taught liberty
To Christian and infidel,
And, by his sense of justice fair,
Their violence did quell.
The fractious rulers he deposed,
E'en bishops, from their power
Of state which they had grasped and
held,
As by the Church's dower.

A Song of Faith

And, by the peoples' suffrage,
New rulers put in stead,
Who all to Godfrey's scepter
Their free allegiance paid.
His herald was fair Freedom's voice,
To justice it oped the way,
Which waiving matters of our faith,
In temporal things hath sway.
Our faith no matter is of laws,
It must be freely taught;
If those who teach it force their
cause,
'Twill be with tyranny fraught.
When Ladislaus this work had done,
He to his heroes said:
"Now to the plains of Askalon,
In haste, we turn our raid.
Afdal of Egypt threatens there,
With daylight-darkening force,
To raze our holy Salem fair,
In his oath-bounden course."
Away o'er mounts of Ephraim,
They speed toward Askalon,
For three long days, from morn till e'en,
Then on till early dawn.
The last day's end they do extend,
Outstripping the setting sun,
When on the Mediterranean,
They see his orb go down.

Next morning soon the crescent moon
Was seen, where battle raged,
And Godfrey with Afdal's wild horde
Unequally was engaged.

Book III—Canto the Fifth

Great swarms of swarthy soldiery,
For miles, there hovered around,
In uniform and maniform,
Like leaves on Autumn-ground,
By whirlwind held together.
By blasts of Christian's swords,
These swarms were scattered, scattering,
While Afdal's nobler lords,
Who close around their leader fought,
Outnumbered Godfrey's force;
And knightly were they armored, too,
And mounted well, on horse,
As fleet as the winds of Winter;
So, Godfrey strove in vain,
While Christian knights were scattered,
'Gainst Afdal's solid main.
Fair Ladislaus soon marked the cause,
Why so the battle surged;
He saw where he must strike with force,
So he his charger urged;
The scattered swarms despising,
O'erleaping streams of gore,
And down on Afdal's mighty flank,
With thundering speed he bore.
Nor could they dodge his Balmung,
Fleetness itself was downed,
As by bright steel the lightning,
And sent to weltering ground.
The flash of blades went down in shades,
The voice of vaunting hushed,
As, in the press, with onward stress,
He and his heroes rushed.
Duke Godfrey now, with lighted brow,
Sore pressed the other flank,

A Song of Faith

And into Afdal's columns deep,
Of noble lords, he sank
His wedge of Christian knighthood.
Fair was their battle-yell,
When, in the face of pale Afdal,
His standard-bearer fell.
Down went the Crescent's dragon head,
Amid a cry of alarm,
And Afdal fled from the field that bled,
Avoiding greater harm.

Now Christian heroes and brave lords
Did think of homes far away,
Of mothers, wives and sisters fond,
Of brides, at home, where it lay;—
In Po's and Tiber's sunny roods,
And Seine's bright hamlets gay,
Beneath the Alpine glaciers high,
On highland, by the bay,
In thorpes of wine-clad river
Rhine,
On sandy marks of the spree,
Or peopled gaus of winding Elb,
Or snow-clad land of the Sea,
On Emerald Isle, or misty land,
Or 'long the peaceful Danube's strand
Where'er home was, its charms
And numerous ties were all the same,
And mightily called from arms,
To peace and its environments,
All free from war's alarms.
Fair Ladislaus away did haste,
So eager for his joy,

Book III—Canto the Fifth

So great, he feared, he knew not what,
As doth the expectant boy
Fear rain, or some great hindrance,
Against his holiday;
So he, in haste solicitous,
To Olivet pressed his way.
Where was the joy which him had led?
His vaguely vexing fear,
And not the hope which him had sped,
Alas! was realized here!
Where Christiana, where his bride?
Her, her he nowhere found!
And from his sight went out the light,
As down he sank to the ground.

Book IV

The Triumph of Faith, Hope and Love

Book IV—Canto the First

THE seer of Light in Darkness
Would be unworthy his name,
And to his calling recreant,
By lovers of light to blame,
If light apocalyptic
Has opened to his soul,
The Muse to see of History
To him events unroll,
In which from crumbling tyranny,
The bride of humanity
Arises, with her tresses spanged,
To kiss the bride of the sky,
And he refuse his lyre to use,
To sing the immortal song;
Immortal shame would blot his name,
From all the living throng.
So felt the bard, in singing
The trials of Buda's lord
And of his faithful Christian bride,
Hard tried, in deed and word,
Upon their homeward journey.
Himself now taking part,
He sings the triumph of their faith,
With sympathetic heart.

To Buda's lord the sun went down,
Forth stalked malignity,
Clothed, to its brow, with dark, dark
frown,
In night's weird tapestry.

A Song of Faith

The silence of the night, in weird
And fear-inspiring sounds
Of wailing multitudinous,
To sorrowful souls abounds.
“O Christiana, where art thou?
Oh! where? Oh! where? Oh! where?
Went thundering through his trembling
soul,
Held bound in night's despair.
Thus lay he long and lonely.
The moon, in moving clouds,
Among the tearful stars did dance,
All clad in mourning shrouds;
She seemed alone, in cheerful tone,
As from the clouds she emerged
Into an azure fleck of sky
And sate serene, while surged
Dark clouds around and under her;
With pale, proud visage the helm
She held, sole regent and aware
Of her benighted realm.
So Helen emerged from darkness,
And stood where Ladislaus lay;
Beneath her cloudy eyebrows dark,
Her face, in triumphant play,
Did dance, at seeing his despair,
Then settle to joy serene;
For thus she hoped, by trouble's
aid,
His heart for herself to wean.
She stood all resolution pale,
With pale, proud visage the helm
She held, sole regent and aware
Of her benighted realm.

Book IV—Canto the First

He raised his eyes and her beheld,
And trembled to see her there,
As oft one trembles, in his dreams,
O'er deeps, verged on despair.
Unsafe was the hold she offered him,
But deep, uncertainty's gulf,
From which, distraught, he safety sought,
To her addressing himself:
"O Helen, Helen, where is she?
Here on this mount she staid,
With Gabriel, to wait for me,
Then home to take our raid."
Then Helen, enigmatical,
Made answer, in words most plain:
"Thy love, fair lord, I thee can show,
In following me, to gain."
Bewilderment of sorrow great,
It was in Buda's lord,
That did his erst clear judgment
cloud,
In hearing Helen's word.
So, he her guidance did accept,
And she appointment made,
Next morning early and equipped,
To start on their errant raid.

Next morning he his heroes called,
And told them his story sad,
And since they Christiana loved,
Their generous hearts were glad,
To serve their lord in finding her;
With him they all would ride
In distance far, through peace and war,
To find his tender bride.

A Song of Faith

And Helen came, a stately dame,
 Astride a royal steed;
Her maidens fair, in number five,
 Bedecked her airy speed.
They were on royal mounts and bold,
 On bay, she, they, on sorrel,
With trappings bound and clasped with
 gold,
 In bunches of blooming laurel.
Her breath was, as the breezes, light,
 Just from the bosom of morn,
And trained the speed of her bay steed,
 Whose breath, from nostrils of scorn,
With lightning paved her pathway.
 She came to the cohort and turned;
With wave of hand, she gave command,
 Which all, to obey, now yearned.
Their speed was that of living thought;
 Her maidens cleft the air
On either side, and threw both time
 And space behind them there,
In order that all might follow.
 They came to a rolling wood,
With dismal fells and gloomy dells
 And towering solitude.
To all it was what they desired,
 When Helen stopped her course;
For fear was in their hearts
 inspired,
 By gloomy, weird and hoarse
Vibrations, coming from the wold,
 As from plutonean caves,
Inhabited by spirits old
 Of ages, in their graves.

Book IV—Canto the First

Then like a hind, fleet as the wind,
She through the forest flew;
And Buda's lord, with clattering sword,
Resolved to follow her through.
She onward rushed ahead of them,
But ever remained in sight,
Endurance, in their progress hard,
And strength, in their hard fight,
To give by her inspiring.
And needed it was, forsooth,
For else was naught encouraging,
In dire reality's truth.
They first encountered serpents vile,
Which made the wold alive,
With listless hiss and loathsome coil,
In many a wicker-hive.
Their dragon heads, with spreading
forks,
Hissed death, from rounding top,
And brought the heroes, on their way,
Here to a sad, sad stop.
They slashed the heads with sabers dull;
Then from the trees and rocks,
From bough and crevice verminful,
They hang, in living locks,
And downward shoot and almost hoot,
With hiss from tongue and eyes;
And up, from creeping seething ground,
They like asparagus rise.
And when they slash them down, they
reek,
With nauseating stench,
So that the heroes e'er must seek
Their sickening thirst to quench.

A Song of Faith

Then from the stench of reeking soil
Dragons, with fiery eyes,
In fear-inspiring shapes and forms,
On every side arise.
With weary soul and body weak,
Of strength-devouring pain,
Fair Buda's lord must hear his men,
Discouraged and sad, complain.
But Helen e'er remained so near,
Her maidens to and fro,
Between her and the men, by her
Were e'er dispatched to go,
To bring them some encouragement;
They thus the dragons fought,
And onward pressed, with hindered
haste,
Withal, they lingered not.
The warty dragons' heads they cleft,
Their long, lank limbs they lopped;
Their bodies, squirming and alive,
To reeking pieces they chopped.
Fair Buda's lord, with leading sword,
The forest soon did clear;
As on they pressed, their courage rose,
Anew from conquered fear.

Then, lo, wild beasts, from brambles
dense,
Out-sprang, with terrible roar,
And offered battle worthier,
Than those they had before,
And likewise much the harder.
To panic were shied the steeds,
In training which the heroes had
No time for nobler deeds.

Book IV—Canto the First

Strength paralyzed, bewildered brain,
And heart, of high emprise
Was robbed, by earthquake roaring loud
Of lion, with piercing cries
Of smaller maws ferocious,
Which filled the trembling wold
With terror omnipresent sheer,
Their course they could not hold.
The trees were shapes of terror dark,
The rocks resounded with fear;
The shades, by terror's staring eyes,
Flashed into goblins clear.
So, each in fear at random drove,
His loose steed rushing on;
From comrades far apart, he strove,
Alone, in the wold, alone.

Fair Ladislaus felt for the cause,
His heart was sore distressed,
Yet more by fear for heroes dear,
Thus scattered and distressed.
He thought of the end which all intend,
How it their courage must save,
If but its inspiration strong
The wind's uproarious wave
Would bear to each one's bosom.
He heaved deep from his breast:
"O Christiana! where art thou?
Thy memory's strong behest
Sustain our sinking courage!"
And, like the chime of a bell,
It filled all sounds of wold around,
And, like sprayed rain-drops, fell
Into the cup of withered hope;
Their courage it gave new force

A Song of Faith

And led their random efforts
Into a definite course.

When thus they greeted Buda's lord,
With joyful eyes, again,
The dismal wold had been all told,
And they looked on a plain,
The picture of plenty and of peace.
There meadows, gardens and fields,
With all the various luxuries,
That ever fair earth yields,
Lay, interspersed with cities grand,
Entwined with rivers and beck,
And placid lakes, and rolling land,
And dotted with knolls and flecks
Of happiest habitations.
The heroes, with delight,
Looked on the land, on every hand,
To pleasure did invite.
Here Helen, in apartments grand,
The fair lord and his men
To rest invited, from their toil,
Thus making her meaning plain,
That all was, for enjoyment, theirs,
Well won by valiant deeds,
As brave employment of the hand
Enjoyment e'er precedes.
No honor, but of leading them,
Would she of the conquest take,
And thus, with words inveigling,
To Ladislaus she spake:
"Fair lord! behold thy conquest
here!
This land of wealth is thine;

Book IV—Canto the First

For thine it was, to conquer it,
While but to lead, was mine.
Together now we can enjoy
Peace and luxurious rest;
Our ministrations mutual
Shall have no higher behest,
Than love and love's contentment.
In such contentment thou
Shalt find thy love, not knowing,
Thyself, where, when or how.
Let sweet rest and enjoyment,
On Lerna's fertile meads,
And by its waves mellifluent,
Dispel all other needs.
For higher there is naught to man,
Than full enjoyment of love,
In free fruition of its sweets,
So attest the Gods above.
In ancient times they did descend
To earth to drink this cup;
If not, of old, it is so told,
To show, all higher hope
To man is useless and in vain.
O Ladislaus! life is life,
Not hope of future bliss to come,
Which makes this life a strife;
But life is life without this strife;
Beyond?—is a gulf unknown;
He's wise who makes here no mistakes,
And lives this life alone."
And wearily he answered her:
"'Tis need, we rest awhile;
But never must these pleasures us,
From our high goal beguile!

A Song of Faith

For body's strength we'll them enjoy,
Let not our spirit sink
Into such pleasures of the flesh
Or for a moment think,
They are the end which we intend,
With life here on this earth;
Else would it, to immortal souls,
Be a continual dearth.
But for God's promises of old,
For which our spirit craves,
We'd still be in the dark, dark wold
Of ages, in their graves.
Fair Heaven's breath must conquer
death;
Without this Light divine,
All earth's enjoyments empty are,
As the green cud of kine
Which ruminates aseemingly,
With naught in mouth but breath,
Until the stomach empty is,
To fill it, on the heath."
"Then come and take refreshments,"
Said Helen, with air demure;
My life thy aspirations high
Shall never blight, I'm sure."
"Nor mine, but light," he answered,
"And strengthen, in its course,
To which this body's nourishment
Must yield the bodily force."
The maidens then refreshment brought,
The maidens of Helen fair,
At which the hungry heroes
Gazed, with avidious stare;
Not long; for the surroundings all
Inviting were, as the meat,

Book IV—Canto the First

And every sense delighted was,
By its peculiar greet.
Of color, grandeur mellowest,
Of sound, the sweetest tones,
Of fragrance, essence of the flowers,
Borne thither from all the zones,
And softness of the air and chairs,
All, all together conspired,
To make the meal delectable,
As ever man desired.
Contentment fills the hearts with
cheer,
Their speech is all aglow
With sentiments of friendship bright,
And Helen directs the flow
Of soul, in conversation light,
Until they are satisfied;
And to the words, aweary grown,
No one any more replied.
Then for diversion they dispersed;
The land was alive with song
Of cheery birds of Spring's fair time,
And joy that rushed along;
It laughed in streams and breezes blithe,
It swelled the fronds of the trees
With motion, sound and waves of light,
In living harmonies.
There, at a lake, whose pebbled shore
Was splashed with gambols of waves,
Which from the hidden deep came up,
Where somber strength e'er laves
The dark abyss, fair Ladislaus
Reclined; fond memory bore
From depths of his soul the fancies wild,
To play on the pebbled shore.

a Song of Faith

At first, the play delightful seemed,
Until dark shadows he saw;
Then struggled he in vain, alas!
His strength together to draw,
Within himself, and it to keep
In meditation pure;
But soon again the world of sense
To gambols forth would lure.
Oh! human heart, perverse thou art,
Beyond the ken of man:
In idleness, thine active stress
Grows to an evil ban!
The land, the lake, the little wave,
Each claimed a conflicting right;
So played, in light, the water's might,
In his sympathetic sight:
Not knowing, whether right or wrong,
Not caring to think of it;
Or whether he took part or not,
What did or not befit.
Then filled with music was the air;
It floating came along,
In sweet, and soft harmonious,
And fragrant-pinioned song.
Then wafted on prismatic beams,
Fair Helen's maidens five
Came singing and dancing over flowers,
And making their path alive
With grace and charm of motion.
Their course to the lake askance,
From dim emerging into clear,
In his now raptured glance,
Upon the mirror of the lake,
Their movements did enhance.

Book IV—Canto the First

Thus to the lord of Buda
They came, where he reclined,
And stopped their nimble progress,
As if surprised to find
One little cloud of sadness,
Which shadowed his fair face;
And each one sang to cheer him,
With her peculiar grace.

FIRST MAIDEN

Oh! where is thy sense of seeing?
Ethereal pure is the light,
Of which are born the colors,
With pleasure's moods to delight
Fair Nature, in joyous Springtime;
It wakens the forms of joy
Throughout the different kingdoms,
Where sparkling faces coy
The sensitive lips of pleasure;
All follow their natural bent,
In pairs and genial companies,
And pleasure to them is lent.
Why wouldst thou alone, in sadness,
Within thyself abide,
While pleasure, in living colors,
And beauty, invites to her side?

SECOND MAIDEN

Oh! where is thy sense of hearing?
Ethereal pure is the air,
Of which is born blithe music
Which ceaseless, without care,
And as her mother fair, doth woo
In everything the sounds,

A Song of Faith

In which, in happy Springtime,
All nature rich abounds;
All things, in search of pleasure,
Do follow their natural bent,
In pairs and genial companies,
And pleasure to them is lent.
Why shouldst thou alone, in sadness,
Within thyself abide,
While pleasure, in tones of music,
And beauty invites to her side?

THIRD MAIDEN

Oh! where is thy sense of smelling?
Ethereal pure are the flowers,
Of which is born the fragrance
Which rises from their bowers,
Inviting the bee and humming bird
To pleasures' reveling,
All in the happy Springtime,
When every living thing
Is, moves and lives in pleasure;
All follow their natural bent,
In pairs and genial companies,
And pleasure to them is lent.
Why shouldst thou alone, in sadness,
Within thyself abide,
While pleasure, with locks of fragrance,
And beauty, invites to her side?

FOURTH MAIDEN

Oh! where is thy sense of tasting?
All pure those powers are,
Of which is born deliciousness,
'Neath Nature's tender care,

Book IV—Canto the First

From blooming, fragrant, virginal,
Inviting the longing lips
To draught of pleasure exquisite,
In precious bits and sips,
When, in the joyous Springtime,
All follow their natural bent,
In pairs and genial companies,
And pleasure to them is lent.
Why shouldst thou alone, in sadness,
Within thyself abide,
While pleasure, with lips ambrosial,
And beauty, invites to her side?

FIFTH MAIDEN

Oh! where is thy sense of touching?
All pure is the blithesome air,
The music and the fragrance,
The sweetness of Nature fair,
Of which is born soft comfort,
With hands as soft as the down
Upon the leaf of lily fair
And bosom as full as the crown
Of quaking asp in forest-grove,
Where birds and squirrels bask
And have no need each other's
Companionship to ask;
All, in the happy Springtime,
They follow their natural bent,
In pairs and genial companies,
And pleasure to them is lent.
Why shouldst thou alone, in sadness,
Within thyself abide,
While pleasure, with balmy bosom,
And beauty, invites to her side?

A Song of Faith

The chorus they together sang,
Thus quickening, with their words,
The powers which in nature lie,
And touch the tenderest chords
In hearts most nobly tempered;
So much, that Javadev,
A bard of darkness, fancied,
That Krishna, whom millions have
As near and dear to mortal man,
Did follow the potent charms
And bask in pleasures of the flesh,
A captive in her arms.

Fair Ladislaus, a moment's spell,
Was touched by the tender song,
When clear his purpose, in the light
Of life again was strong,
And marked out clear before him
The spirit's unerring course,
To which the body's nourishment
Must yield the bodily force.
The maidens refrain their tuneful strain,
And leave him alone with thought,
In which by prayer invincible,
To joyous triumph he fought.

Book IV—Canto the Second

HAIR Buda's lord was troubled,
As when the trav'ler awakes,
And sees the shadows lengthening,
And sloth from his muscles shakes;
So he now shakes the loos'ning slakes
Of sloth from his soul with thought
Of Christiana, his fair bride,
For whom he was distraught.
And all afire with pure desire,
It thunders in his breast:
"Shall I thus, ere my bride is found,
Indulge in ease and rest?
O, Christiana! thought of thee
Is garden of joy to me.
All, all my springs of higher things
Are found alone in thee;
In thy love's holy paradise
My pleasures pure are kept.
When erst within those bounds of bliss
The coiling serpent crept,
With guilt and carnal appetites
Destroying the springs of joy,
This one, caught up to higher hope,
His sin could not destroy.
I to that happy Eden fly,
To thee, my bride! I haste,
Nor shall I, ere I thee have found,
Indulge in ease or rest."

A Song of Faith

Straightway he stood up on the sward,
Nor lingered any more;
But now with eyes fair as the skies
He sought the castle door,
Where Helen grandly him received,
With gestures and speech to suit,
And clad, so that her person's charms
With them the domain dispute.
The clear vibrations quivered, quick
With sympathetic air
Which was with strong enchantment
fraught,
As she addressed him there:
"Brave lord, we wait thy coming,
To fill thy fondest desire
With amplest pleasure here and now;
Why wilt thou higher aspire?"
"Here 'tis," he answered, "on my shield;
To God-ward is my course,
To which this body's nourishment
Must yield the bodily force;
In this my course it me behooves
To stay, nor in body or mind,
Until my Christiana fair
In visible parts I find."

He spake and clear the bugle's sound
His men together did call;
And from their sport of every sort
They soon were assembled all;
But all seemed disappointed;
Their inclination was plain,
Here in fair Lerna's vernal meads,
In indolence, to remain.

Book IV—Canto the Second

Fair Helen remarked in triumph:
“Thy men are wiser than thou;
They know the good of plenitude
Which they have here and now.”
Then he to her and them did say:
“Ah! yes, the sluggard is wise,
When he devours the present hours,
Not caring how time flies!
Time, time flies to eternity,
And soon these joys here, even,
By thoughts of happy homes must be
(Naught saying of those of Heaven)
Surcharged with bitter sediments;
Nor can we, at all, deny
The one, nor th’ other one disown,
For both within us lie—
The temporal and eternal home—
And bound by a holy tie.
Our seeking Christiana
Is on our journey home,
And not until we her have found,
Shall we to that haven come.”

When Ladislaus had spoken thus,
Fair thought was alive again;
Soon in the light, to left and right,
They stamped the verdant plain.
And Helen, no more left to choose,
The best she can must do;
So, he commanding, while she led,
They on their raid pursue.
Their speed was that of living
thought;
Her maidens cleft the air,

A Song of Faith

On either side, and threw both time
And space behind them there,
In order that all might follow.
They came to a mountain range,
So high, so peaked, so rough rock-reefed,
It made the men look strange.
The mountain seemed impassable;
All dismal, lichened steeps,
With rocks of fear-inspiring shapes,
O'erhanging threatening deeps
That yawned in silence thundering;
The spirits of ages, in strife,
Seemed there to hold their forts of old,
With ancient fueds still rife.
But, like a wind, the rugged heights
Fair Helen ascending flew;
Dim path she made, and darkly laid,
For them to follow through.
Far in the van her steed outran,
But she remained in sight,
Endurance in their progress hard,
And strength, in their hard fight,
To give by her inspiring;
And needed it was, forsooth,
For else was naught encouraging,
In dire reality's truth.
Their steeds they spur to follow her,
O'er dark and slippery ways;
And when they to the sunlight came,
They soon, from its near rays,
Re-entered fells of darkness;
From strangely sounding rocks,
O'er bracken bare, they came to where
The wild, interminate locks

Book IV—Canto the Second

Of fallen trees entangled them.

Then Helen to their aid
Her maidens sent, them to direct
Upon their upward raid.

But, lo! they were confronted there
By knights, in armor strange,
On chargers strange and strangely
trapped,
In awe-inspiring range.

Their battle, too, was strange and new,
With movements strange and sounds
Which caused the mount to tremble,
And rocks, from hanging grounds,
Down into fells to thunder.

When Ladislaus led the charge,
Alas, alas, it came to pass
That many o'er the marge
Of terrace into brambles thick
Were landed. In dismay
They struggled for their fellow knights,
Upon their upward way.
Those strange knights shook off every
strook,

And sent back such a shock,
As when with windy maul of wood
One strikes against a rock.
The heroes' state was desperate;
Beyond, the terrace rose,
Their high career there showing clear,
And here these foes oppose;
They see their comrades struggling,
E'er losing strength and will;
On either side there rose and fell
The unsurmountable hill.

A Song of Faith

In vain all their endeavors seemed,
Until they changed their strain;
For, as one calls into the woods,
The echo comes again.
So, now the strangers turned their face
And turned their steeds around;
And up the mount together, now,
They ride on friendly ground.
But first their comrades they assist,
Who struggled still in vain,
Their high career now bright and clear,
With them, in the Light, to gain.
Success now futher crowned success;
Along the terrace aslope,
They pass o'er ledge, with narrow edge,
By many a giddy scope,
O'er pinnacles, and rocky fells,
By gulfs abyssmal that yawned,
From mouth of Time's primeval climes,
O'er which the Day-star dawned.
Then on they pass through growing grass,
By streams and sylvan shades,
By fields of grain, and vine-clad hills,
And peaceful country glades.

The prospect grew both bright and new
Beyond and far around
With peaceful rise toward the skies,
Without an end or bound.
And, lo, there lay, not far away
The homes of a new world,
Which rose in light of liberty,
By columns of smoke enfurled;
'Twas thrid and with a lining fringed,
Of thought's industrious light,

Book IV—Canto the Second

As when the sun of Harvest-Home
Approaches a sunset bright.

Between were armies bristling,
All drawn in battle-array,
With different heads, as chieftains,
Beneath one-minded sway,
To bar the way to Freedom's day;
It was Mauhassim, crowned,
With dusty keys in livid hand,
And followed by minions gowned.
'Twas for the Old he them did hold,
To fight for faith and fame,
And, with his might from Heaven's
height,
The world's course he would frame.
He promised wealth and honor fair
For service in his cause,
And for their sins they need not care,
According to his laws.
He claimed and those acclaiming
Were thus held by a lie
Which darkened many ages long,
And but with them will die.
Fair Ladislaus his heroes told;
The strange knights, just acquired,
Invited to his standard bright,
Were willing, and all desired
To show their faith by faithful
work;
And from the North a knight
Whose name to fame illustrious
Now sudden broke forth to light,
By this assumed the leadership.
The rising people hail

A Song of Faith

Their coming, as deliverance,
For sad had been their wail
Beneath Mauhassim's tyranny,
Now all the more severe,
Because the light, so new and bright,
To many of them was dear.
That war plowed furrows deep and
long
Which flowed with mingled gore;
Down went the wrong, the right grew
strong,
With fruits of faith galore.
And Buda's lord, with humbled sword,
Had courage in his breast,
Which equal rose, from conquered foes,
To every need that pressed.
With Christiana were his thoughts,
Where'er she might abide;
And he found comfort in her lot,
Removed from stormy tide,
So full of war's destructive scars.
He knew her constancy,
Unchanged as light from heaven bright,
And ever as full and free,
Though clouds may dash the earth with
fright.
This made his courage strong,
From buried Old to rise anew,
In war so hard and long.
A chieftain of Mauhassim's now,
Conspicuous in his ire,
Stood forth with name of battle's fame
And led, with sword and fire,
The war of persecution fierce,
With terror to make men cower

Book IV—Canto the Second

To old and cold authority
And to Mauhassim's power.
His mighty hosts he gathered,
The knights in their course to crush,
Forever the cry of liberty
In its own gore to hush.
But there that hero from the North,
From fair, victorious raid,
In which he much had conquered
And everywhere had said:
"The conscience free shall ever be
From every outward force
Of government, where I do rule;
To me in all my course.
All, all alike good subjects are,
Who do obey the law
Which leaves faith free, as it should
be;"—

When he there clearly saw
Mauhassim's chief conspicuous
Stand for a decisive fray,
Down on him he came with might and
main,
In dusky dawn of day.
With thoughts of Christiana,
Fair Buda's lord was there,
And all his heroes thought
of her,
In the world beyond, so fair,
To see her rise in fairer skies.
As soon as them around
The rising light of dawn displayed
Enough of the sleeping ground,
To give their feet direction,
While o'er and about them still

a Song of Faith

Black clouds of darkness hovered,
Forth from that Northman's will
In muffled tones the word went forth:
"To arms! and forward, all!
Fear not, my little flock, fear not!
The kingdom to you must fall!"
And onward they to battle rushed,
Before them shoving the cloud,
Soon streaked with roaring flashes
Of thundering battle loud.
The Northman did direct the course
Of vernal thunder storm;
Upon the cloud's white edge he
rode,
So far in the van, his form
To friend and foe was visible;
His force from darkness broke
Upon the frightened enemy,
With clattering thunder stroke.
The Northern knight, in armor bright,
For glorious victory paid
Full price, to crown his fair renown;
To death was his fair raid.
But Buda's lord, with flashing sword,
To victory led his men,
Whose courage, from that Northman's
death,
Was fierce and strong, as when
Nobility is made to see
An outrage; on they rushed
And made all foes ignoble,
In death and darkness hushed.
Thus, in the dawn of liberty,
Mauhassim's chief must yield;

Book IV—Canto the Second

Away he flew with humbled few
From that great battlefield.
The stranger knights pursue him,
In almost aimless war
Which 'twixt the Old and New bright
world
Was waged on long and far,
In countries, towns and villages;
But Buda's lord his way,
Clear to the New, now did pursue,
That still yet rising day.

Book IV—Canto the Third

THE sun's fair glory is high noon,
And thus the glory of time;
For aye the sun is in his noon,
Whate'er may be the clime,
Of Orient or Occident,
On which his face looks down,
Unchanged, though changed the peoples
are,
And scenes of land and town.
These have their midnight darkness,
Their manifold boding dawn,
Their duty's morn, and glory's noon,
From which, through sultry yawn,
They pass to sunset's peace or storm,
And then into the night,
While from on high, in noon's fair sky,
The sun pours down his light.
So truth forever, like the sun,
Has one unchanging noon;
The same, while ages, as they turn,
Are like the changeful moon.
The mists of sin come in between,
And forms of thought opaque
Bar from man's sight the truth's fair
light,
And thus the changes make.
Here comes a form which all doth
charm,
Sprung from man's common head,
As from old Jove's Athene fair,
Its wings for a time to spread,

Book IV—Canto the Third

As highest light of knowledge bright,
Until by another chased,
It passes shy from out the sky,
To sink dark and abased.
But aye unchanging and unchanged,
The light of truth is abroad,
And all, whose hearts are to it turned,
Are of the kingdom of God.

It was high noon, when Ladislaus,
With all his ardent men,
To the new world, with stripes unfurled,
By Helen, with heart as fain,
And fairest speech, was welcomed.
She spake, short of her mind:
“Fair lord, behold thy conquests here;
These comforts, so refined,
Of soul and body, in plenitude,
With knowledge of living are thine;
For thine it was, to conquer them,
While but to lead, was mine.”
Ere Ladislaus could answer her,
Her maidens came along,
To entertain them, at their feast,
With bits of tale and song.
They of the world’s great progress sang,
Beyond all former times,
Which to our tables comforts brings,
From all earth’s various climes,
And shows us how them to enjoy,
With consciousness supreme
Of sovereign mind and will, o’er all
Men did erst holy deem.
They sang of science wonderful,
It put all wonders to shame

A Song of Faith

Of sacred myths and myths profane,
Which older, as they became,
By men had been more holy deemed,
And made the ground of belief,
In things revealed from God, as if
Man's reason were not chief.

They of the human graces sang,
Of love and charity,
Which all mankind encircling
Must make one family,
In which to live will pleasure give;
By culture of man they'd thriven,
To which great men their faculties,
And e'en their lives had given:
As Moses, Homer, Plato,
And Jesus and Socrates,
Apostles, Aristotle, Buddha,
And other men like these.
Their song was sweet, in measures
meet,
And from the Tree of Life,
With others, they the flowers plucked,
To deck their strain, as if
He were but one of human kind;
Alas! they could not see
The Woman's Seed, the Son of God,
In our humanity,
The mystery of Godliness;
This they could not discern;
'Twas all, 'twas all of human growth;
All to man's glory they turn.
And Helen, with approving eye,
To Ladislaus all applied,

Book IV—Canto the Third

And looked on him complaisantly,
With all the contagion of pride.
Ere he had time to answer her,
She rose and proposed to go,
And she to him the glories all
Of this new world would show.
She led him into meetings grand
Of most intelligent air,
Where Science proud her scepter
showed,
And men and women fair
Admired all, in humble thrall,
Who, in most flattering way,
Their mighty powers of thought, in
words,
With reason, did display.

One spake of sun and moon and stars,
As if he had been there,
And every fancy plausible
He turned to science fair,
With friendly and familiar grace;
The morning stars must blush,
Who praised the Lord's creative
word,
Their worshiping song must hush
Before man's mind of nobler kind,
Which nebulous worlds explored,
And oped to all admiring minds
The knowledge so long there stored.
And Helen, with approving eye,
To Ladislaus all applied,
And looked on him complaisantly,
With all the contagion of pride.

A Song of Faith

Another of the earth discoursed,
He called it geology;
And every fancy plausible
He turned to science free,
And, from its open pages, read
Such wonderful things, for truth,
That all the wonders Moses wrote
Were put to the blush, forsooth;
Beyond all Scripture, wonder-wise,
He made cosmogeny clear,
That any one, not heeding him,
For his fair honor must fear.
And Helen, with approving eye,
To Ladislaus all applied,
And looked on him complaisantly,
With all the contagion of pride.

A third one spake of living things,
Which move and creep on earth,
Their genus and their species,
Their promulgation and birth,
From lower to the higher kinds,
And every possible dream
He into truth of science turned
And made it plausible seem.
Thence evolution he evolved,
And showed the grand highway,
On which all life developing,
Goes upward, 'neath the sway
Of cold survival of the best;
Thus man, from lowest grade
Of life in slimy larva, had
Most evident progress made.

Book IV—Canto the Third

And Helen, with approving eye,
To Ladislaus all applied,
And looked on him complaisantly,
With all the contagion of pride.

A fourth one taught philosophy
Of nature's forces and laws,
And deep relations and obtuse,
Between the effect and cause.
He spake of force and gravity,
And of centrifugal power,
Of sound, of heat, of light and
air

Surrounding us every hour,
With their useful phenomena,
And entertaining, withal,
If we but let philosophy
Attention to them call.
They were but modes of motion,
In matter, which ever moves
And changing forms and places,
Eternal being proves;
And e'en our souls and senses,
Of matter which makes our frame,
Are naught but modes of motion,
As light and sound, the same.
We are the universal mind!
What exquisite frames we are!
We feel the world's pulsations,
E'en from the remotest star,
And understand their language,
While riding the ceaseless waves
Of diamond-flashing motion!
What pleasure our senses laves!

A Song of Faith

And Helen, with approving eye,
To Ladislaus all applied,
And looked on him complaisantly,
With all the contagion of pride.

But in him great commotion rose,
And he began to awake
To danger vaguely threatening
And thus to Helen spake:
“But where is Christiana?
Not here can she be found,
I feel it in the utterance
Of spirit which doth abound.
As little as fowls in water,
Or fishes in the air,
Or lark in night's deep darkness,
Is Christiana fair
Found here, in these surroundings.
Lead hence, I thee command!
Where Christiana I may find,
May find, in this fair land.”
And Helen, though disappointed,
Becalmed her restless mind,
And said: “Here's love and freedom,
Thy love why wilt not find?
Thyself why wilt thus trammel,
Nor freedom of love enjoy?
Albeit, to find thy love, behold,
I am at thy employ.”
Again she into meetings led
Of men and women devout,
Where preachers were applauded loud
With sacred song and shout
Expressing ardent lealty
To what was plausible made,

Book IV—Canto the Third

While to the human mind and soul
Fair compliments were paid.
They showed the world's great
progress,
E'er rising higher and higher,
To light from former darkness;
'Twas thus God did inspire,
By evolution's onward roll.
In former times men deemed
To need the force of miracles
For truths which important seemed.
We find them thus in ancient myths,
To give to truth more force,
As revelation from on High,
To take on earth its course.
But we are grown beyond them;
We are so far advanced,
That to our reason truth is not
By miracles enhanced.
We read those ancient writings,
Containing the germs of truth,
As made by men beneath the strain
And stress of mankind's youth,
For us it is to find those germs,
That in our hearts they grow,
Developing the seed of life,
For good of the world, to sow.
As onward ever moves the world,
The truth assumes new forms,
Which, too, those preachers did present,
With all their newest charms.
They called for union of all creeds,
By which to bring about
The reign of Christianity,
All creedless and devout.

A Song of Faith

So plausible their motives were,
Fair Ladislaus took part,
By Helen encouraged, so to do,
And by his generous heart.
Now Helen reaped enjoyment sweet,
He being of one consent,
With her in generous work of love,
And his high countenance bent
To her and to her blandishments.
However he sadly proved
The vanity of all their works,
While in these ranks he moved.
For it is true, alas! too true,
That from man's sinful heart
No lasting good at all can come,
God's word must all impart.
Hence vain were their endeavors all,
And evils grew in earth,
Of knowledge, faith and piety
There grew a sad, sad dearth.
Nor would men be united,
However they labored hard,
And aye new sects and schisms proud
All progress did retard.
Among them then Mauhassim
His black-gowned minions sent,
And claimed he could unite all men,
And that his work was bent
On betterment of human kind;
And some e'en hailed his power,
As useful to fair union's cause,
And given by heavenly dower.
But just like one, in forest dark,
Uncertain about his way,

Book IV—Canto the Third

There sees the coil and serpent's head,
And hears its rasping lay,
Which both he spurns and quickly turns,
So Ladislaus, alarmed
At crowned Mauhassim's minions
gowned,
Turned from the way which had
charmed
His steps uncertain onward.
He called, he called his men,
With Balmung's dim resounding din,
To seek their course again.
The land was fair with riches rare,
And men in free pursuit
Of every trade, with implements
Made of the peaceful loot
Of mountain, mere and cloud and air,
And hills and dales with schools
Were decked, in which the pupils were
Taught under Freedom's rules.
Fair Ladislaus example took
Of these, for his fair home,
When he, united with his bride,
To it again would come.
There, too, the bard, his pastor, then,
This song of his erring sang,
With light in darkness to console
His hearts remorseful pang.

Now from a distant country,
Where fully Mauhassim reigned,
A potent breed of rotten seed
Which had God's footstool stained,

A Song of Faith

With blood of revolution foul,
Was wafted wide along,
Creating disaffection dire
And rumors of war most strong.
Thence came a tide of fierce revolt,
And men, for the sake of peace,
With faith in God and liberty,
The glorious rolls increase
Of names immortal, written now,
With blood, in the blue sky,
In which, with stars in tresses fair,
Fair Freedom mounts on high.
This issue was the working power
Of God's adorable word,
Which, in this land of Freedom had
To freedom been restored.
This gives to God all sovereignty
O'er men and nations, alone,
To wield, in His wise providence,
The powers, from His throne,
So that men, subject to these
powers,
From human power free,
In body serve the common weal,
And thus have liberty.
Hence by its light, in this dark world,
Must freedom ever increase,
When wars 'mong sinful mortals
Subside and end in peace.
Not so, in dark Mauhassim's reign,
Where he on earth all power,
By usurpation blasphemous,
Holds in official dower;
There every war increases it,
To freedom's sad decrease;

Book IV—Canto the Third

And despotism fattens by
The spoils and plunder of peace.
Hence revolution had to come
For liberty's fair sake,
And bright renown immortal crown
The names which it did make.

Fair Ladislaus observed the cause,
And Helen was glad to see
His countenance delighted thus,
For now she hoped to be
Near, near the end she did intend,
When she in his smiles might bask
And, both content with love and peace,
No further enjoyment ask.
But nay, the truth was to her ruth,
His change, not to her hand,
His onward bearing wonderful
She could not understand.
She now was made to follow him,
Who erst had followed her,
And could not e'en deflect his course,
Which onward he did spur.
As when the hart, from mountain side,
Comes down and sees the bog,
Instinctively the fountain seeks,
Despite the pursuing dog
Which can't deflect his nimble steps;
So Ladislaus now sought,
In self-directing course, his bride,
And Helen heeded not.
"O, Christiana! where art thou?
Shall I not find thee here?
What halo doth surround thee now?
'Tis my own fault I fear!

A Song of Faith

For where the Word hath liberty
And power to bless the world,
To many it's a mystery,
And on, in darkness hurled,
They seek the good of humanhood,
To higher virtues blind!
Alas! alas! it came to pass,
I strayed, in body and mind!
My soul is in a desert here,
Though everywhere abound
The joyful streams of human life
And fruits of peace around!
Yet is my soul in loneliness,
And all its powers for thee
Do sigh aloud for ever more!
Thy light must comfort me!"
So Buda's lord, with humble sword,
Now felt himself at sea,
Without a compass for his soul,
And driven before the lee,
With rigging loose and out of use;
So, he now sought again
For solid sound and faithful ground,
Which comfort would contain.
Thank God! the truth's abroad, forsooth,
And gives a certain sound,
As word of God unchangeable,
And founded on the ground
Of prophets and apostles, Christ,
Himself the corner-stone,
Who is the Life and Light of men,
In whom we live alone.
This now again his heart did claim,
As firm eternal rock,

Book IV—Canto the Third

And gave him rest and comfort blest,
Against the changeful shock
Of waves and billows driving far
His soul to moorings strange,
In which the compass of his soul
Had lost its upward range.
Ah! now he saw, by God's pure law,
His wickedness of heart,
And sin's deceptive hidden power,
In every human part.
He saw the perfect righteousness,
Which God from man requires,
In love to God and humankind,
In deeds, words and desires.
It is a mirror pure and bright,
Which shows each sinful blot,
And stops not of perfection short,
In deepest motive of thought.
The Gospel then its healing balm
Poured on the wounds of sin
The grace of pardon through the Lamb,
And thus his heart did win
To filial love, in which the Dove
Its Abba, Father cried,
With answer to the ransomed soul:
"I am thy strength and guide."
He heard the song of ransomed throng,
And all his soul was thrilled
With joy beyond expression fond,
As were his quest fulfilled.
But who the rapture of his joy,
With words of song can tell,
When, with the evening-red, he saw
Approaching Gabriel.

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

AMID the Ural forests wild
Fair Ladislaus and his men
Had pitched their tents, for night's approach

Admonished to rest again.
Full often had they rested
Through nights that rested them not
From labors of twelve days and nights,
Much harder than the lot
Of Hercules, in labors twelve,
Escaping from the ban
Eurystheus had upon him laid:
So Gabriel led the van
Of Christian men, escaping from
The strong, persistent charms
Of Helen, until was broke the spell,
And they could rest their arms.

Said Ladislaus to Gabriel:
"O bard! my faithful friend!
My gratitude to thee to tell,
Too soon my life will end!
My warmest heart shall be thy part,
For now, oh, joy! to my bride,
With certainty thou leadest me;
Soon she'll be at my side!
Thou comest straight from her to me?
Oh! how doth she now fare?

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

Thou knowest the plot of wickedness,
By which the two did dare,
To bear her bound, fair virtue bound!
From me away, away,
And me, in seeking her, alas!
To lead so far astray?
Thou knowest all? Oh! tell, oh, tell!
And let my heroes hear;
For truly Christiana fair
To every one is dear.”
As in the grove the animals
Were charmed by Orpheus’ reed,
And came in throngs to hear his songs,
With still and ravished heed,
So to that name of purest fame,
When Gabriel his song
Began, in star-lit forest wild,
The heroes together throng,
To hear of Christiana fair,
Her faith and constancy,
Who held, e’en while imprisoned vile,
Her soul’s bright liberty.
“Upon the mount of Olivet,”
The bard his story began,
“She was expecting thee, her lord,
According to the plan,
On which together you’d agreed,
To take your journey home,
When from thy raid thou wouldst return;
And tidings to her had come,
That thou wert now returning soon;
Her heart was full of joy,
And oft I heard her sing aloud,
Her leisure to employ:

A Song of Faith

‘O Ladislaus! thou art coming,
And home together we’ll go;
‘O Ladislaus! thou art coming,
And bliss will triumph o’er woe.
Lord! how Thy grace endureth,
Thy truth is ever new;
Grant grace, as Thou has granted,
While we Thy ways pursue.
My heart! prepare for blessing’s share,
A shrine for joy and bliss;
For we each other possessing e’er,
Shall journey home in peace.’
Alas! this hope was blighted;
Lord Bela, with evil eye,
Came, like a cloud o’er sunshine;
He came with blasting lie,
That thou hadst fallen, in a fray;
And her hadst given to him,
To carry her home and marry her;
To polish his lying theme,
He told how thou hadst fallen,
Almost a hero, he said,
And his approaching to thy aid
The scene heroic had made.
But she changed not, in face or thought,
But answered Bela’s lie:
‘Not thus, not thus, did Ladislaus,
As thou hast spoken, die!’
Just then to prove it, I was moved,
For I reliable word
Of thee and of thy coming soon,
From Askalon had heard.
So Bela changed his word and mien,
And said: ‘Come, follow me!’

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

Be thou inclined my word to mind,
Else force must conquer thee!
But she changed not, in face or thought,
And said: 'I wait my lord;
With this resolve the fibers loud
Of my whole soul accord;
Desist thy restless passion wild,
Which thou mistakest for love,
Ere thou its vanity and woe,
In jaws of hell, must prove!'
Then he gave orders to his men,
Us captive both to bind,
With her, to deal more tenderly,
With me, they need not mind.
And, as to bind her, they approached,
Oh! how I longed for a sword,
E'en unto death her to defend!
But all my sword was the word,
Which has no force 'gainst passion's
course,
When, in a heart so rude,
It breaks the fence, in violence
And daring hardihood.
So Christiana fair was bound;
Oh! like a lamb, so meek!
Her eyes beamed forth her strength of
soul,
Her body yielding weak!
Away then we were carried,
A stately captive she,
And I, in ruthless fetters hard,
All burning to set her free;
But fettered and of weapon void,
My arm was powerless,

A Song of Faith

And could but to the future look,
With hope, in present distress.
In her I saw it stronger still,
So calm, in her fair eyes,
Both time it holds, and space in folds,
Like stars serene, in the sky's
Tear-veiled Lactean galaxy;
Milk-white the veil it spread,
As of enchanted halo fair,
O'er all her face and head.
Her lips were like the lily's blush,
Like alabaster, her cheeks,
Her brows, like clouds of drooping rain,
O'erveiling the sun which seeks
To spread the bow of promise low,
Her forehead, like glory's throne,
So sate she in her chariot rude,
And was, in that crowd, alone.
The maids appointed her to serve,
All felt her virtue's power,
Which chastened their out-cropping
moods,
As sunshine doth the flower.
When Bela lodged for nightly halt,
Then he his pleasure would seek,
In Christiana's company,
And show, with manners meek
And simulations of respect,
That he no captive would hold
The lady of his youthful love,
But win her with love whole-souled.
Wealth he'd bestow, as he could show,
And then, at his command

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

Around her were the treasures spread,
And pleasures of every land.
Her feet the costliest rugs did tread,
With flowers of exquisite mold;
To her they bear great jewels rare,
On massive platters of gold;
Ringlets he showed, which warmly
glowed,
With brilliants, together wrought,
Three times her neck encircling,
Of value, in Europe unbought;
And crowns and coronets he showed,
Which were with jewels ablaze;
Silk gowns, and lace, and linen stuffs;
And coins, amounts to amaze,
In tankards of silver glazed and gilt;—
All this he there displayed,
And then, with passionate ardor wild,
He blandly to her said:
'Fair lady! here my wealth behold,
'Tis of my love to thee;
'Twill be my joy, if thou but wilt
Accept it all of me.
My raid I have to profit turned,
Not only to my soul,
By getting my indulgence sealed,
For pious I am, in the whole,
But also unto riches real,
In royal loot and spoil,
From conquered merchant, prince and
king,
In Salem's last turmoil.
With these thou wilt in glory live,
My lady love and queen;

A Song of Faith

They'll make thy heart rejoice in what
Long my desire has been.'
But she changed not in face or thought,
And thus made prompt reply:
'O Bela base, thy wickedness
Began with a noxious lie!
But now thou dost insult me most,
By offering such a heart,
As though with thee, in vanity,
I, I could take one part!'
He answered: 'Christiana, pray,
My piety I protest;
My priest I faithfully obey;
With gifts I have redressed
Whatever is wrong, in what I do;
I full indulgence have,
As bearer of the holy Cross,
And further my soul to lave
Of all the sin that I may do;
A priest I have endowed,
The mass for me to offer up;
By him my wooing's allowed.'
He raised a bell from table round,
And spread the tingling sound;
A troop of surpliced boys appeared,
And bowed to him profound,
And altar placed on ermine laced,
Of alabaster and gold,
With crucifix and plate and cup,
Of value all untold.
The priest the bloodless offering
Elated, in the host,
And smoke of incense circled 'round
The heathen holocaust.

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

‘ Knowest not this holy service? ’
To Christiana he said ;
‘ ’Tis dear, but from my treasury,
It well can be defrayed.’
She said : ‘ Alas ! I know it, yes,
’Tis darkest sacrilege
Of what to Christians holy is,
As being the gracious pledge
Of Christ’s complete atonement
And presence, with pardon for sin,
To which, by true repentance,
He all our hearts would win !’
So changed she not, in face or thought,
And Bela looked amazed,
As on the screen which rose between
Reflectingly he gazed.
He called his priest, to speak for him,
Whose words to him were shrine
Of truths profuse, him to excuse
From thinking on things divine.
He Christiana should instruct,
And by authority turn
Her heart from erring mind reluct,
In which she him did spurn.
He came and said : ‘ My daughter fair !
King Bela’s a faithful son ;
His gifts are princely to the church,
And ably hath he won
The honor of this holy war ;
To profit he turned this raid,
While others empty Christian vows,
In all this warfare, paid.
So Buda’s lord, the ardent knight,
Has wasted his holy raid,

A Song of Faith

And fallen into heresy,
Which boldly he displayed,
When, from the common service
Of holy and solemn mass,
He did withdraw at Salem's walls;
And after the glorious pass
Of arms, o'er them victorious,
He spared the infidel,
Whose spoils, by right of conquest's
 might,
To Christian bishops fell.
He plainly showed his heresy;
Turn, turn, my daughter! turn,
From Ladislaus to Bela!
This pure love do not spurn!'
And Bela looked imploringly
And mentioned Helen's name,
In sentences so slantingly,
His rival to defame.
But she changed not, in face or thought,
Except the flash of her eye,
Which was with strong repulsion
 fraught,
As she made this reply:
'To Buda's lord my heart is bound,
With bonds of love and truth,
'Gainst which your lying slanders sound
Like bats from midnight's booth.
And, in the light of memory,
Communion with him I hold,
Until he come to take me home,
From bondage dark and cold.'

"And then I saw," said Gabriel,
"In light, far, far away,

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

Thee, lord of Buda, seeking far,
By Helen led astray.
I saw thy wanderings wearisome,
And conflicts heavy and hard,
And felt the joy and felt the pain,
Of being a deedless bard,
To see and feel and not to do;
And, by a mighty resolve,
To put my song to action strong;
I did a plan evolve,
To seek a way from Bela's sway,
And thus to thee to speed,
That thee I might, in truth's fair light,
To Christiana lead.
To me the thought the power
brought;
Before the morning's dawn,
I had to Christiana fair
My strong resolve made known.
I strengthened her with certainty,
That succor to her was near;
Not long should she imprisoned be,
I saw her way out clear.
I would, though passive, active be,
And still be borne along,
To their dark place of prisondom
Which never should be too strong,
For me to work my exit from;
Then would I haste away,
To bring thee from thy wanderings,
Far, far, in the world, astray.
Thy wanderings were not wanton,
Her heart I assured, though sure,
That thou wert seeking only her,
Thy love's ideal pure;

A Song of Faith

To her I surely thee would lead,
And truth and righteousness
Would triumph in your union yet,
With peace your lives to bless.
When I to her had spoken thus,
Her beauty, like the rose,
From bud did blow to glory's glow,
And strongly me dispose,
To sing her joys, with gladsome voice;
But then I felt again,
That action greater was than song,
And did, for the nonce, refrain."
"Oh sing!" the lord of Buda cried,
And all his heroes the same;
"Sing, sing of Christiana fair,
Her glory, her name, her fame,
Her beauty passing loveliness,
Her breath of love, so pure,
The halo of her presence bright,
The meekness, to endure,
And changing not, in face or thought,
But walk, like Heaven's light,
Amid the storms and blasting forms,
The storms and forms of night.
Oh, sing of Christiana fair!
But, nay," said Buda's lord;
"For action greater is than song,
The living deed, than the word;
We all are burning for the deed,
Our Christiana to free;
To urge and to direct us right,
We wait of thy song and thee."
"Ah! that I will," said Gabriel;
"They bore us away, away,

Book IV—Canto the Fourth

Upon the way from East to West,
And there, at e'en, one day,
We came to where the castle stood
Upon a river's bank,
Which flowed along the evening red,
In blue stream, long and lank.
This castle they our prison made;
To Christiana they gave
Apartments near the willowed bank,
The river's waters lave,
To me, dark dampness they assigned.
Albeit, I made my way
To her and her apartments bright,
And then to the light of day."

Now seemed the trees to heed the breeze,
So charmed by the poet's song;
So strong the spell of silence fell,
Which held the listening throng.
With eyes of night, expectant, bright,
Some wanted to hear how he
Had his escape from prison made,
And others, yet more, how she
In prison fared, at Bela's hands.
The poet marked it well;
Of his own deeds he silent was,
But of her fate to tell.
"She's there surrounded with the
scenes
And myths of godless gods,
And goddesses, and warriors,
The former obeying the nods
Of human prayer, as if they were
Benign divinities,

A Song of Faith

All decked in dark Olympian
And Christian liveries.
She breathes the air thus poisoned there,
And Bela ever persists
In his dark part, to win her heart,
While he such aid enlists.
But like a rose, in desert home,
She blooms in purity,
And is but waiting thee to come,
To come and set her free.
'Tis near in time, 'tis near in space,
Three days the raid is long;
Be patient and we'll run the race,
And make our fight a song."
"Ah! that we will," the Christian
knights,
With sounding accord all cried,
While Buda's lord, with tear-bright eye
Of silent purpose, replied:
"But first let us in slumber seek
Our needful night's repose,
That bright we may start with the day,
To pluck the desert rose."

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

THE rising strength of morning light
The trees of the forest held
In motion's pensive passiveness,
As up to their crests it welled
And made them wave to Orient beams,
Which o'er the hillocks broke,
Prone slumber routing from her dreams;
And so the heroes awoke.
The forest was with greetings loud,
And inspiration strong;
And on the breezes Gabriel
Poured forth his morning song:
"The light the darkness overcomes,
And ushers in the day;
It calls to life from slumber's arms,
And drives night's dreams away.
On life's ascending pathway,
It strengthens the high emprise
To any duty of the day
In manly bosom to rise.
Past efforts vain and weakening
Are buried with the past,
And, in the light of rising day,
The lines of life are cast.
Good Lord! to us, this strong bright
morn,
Now grant this double boon,
That on our way to liberty
Thy light may lead us soon!"

A Song of Faith

“Amen!” the lord of Buda said,
And truly, it soon so proved;
The still small voice made all rejoice
And roused, as it behooved.
Their breaking fast was light repast,
And soon, in bright array,
They waiting stood, in eagerness,
To hear what he might say.
Not long; for he, too, mounted stood,
All ready for the raid;
And Gabriel was at his side,
When Buda’s lord thus said:
“Now on, to pluck the desert rose,
To bloom in happy home!
Prepared to face, or not, our foes,
Homeward and onward, come!”
He spake and turned his downy-white
And sympathetic steed,
And, Gabriel still at his side,
With irresistible speed,
They through the rushing forest rode,
The forest back, they on;
With it the echoes backward flowed
And in their wake went down.
Soon from the forest they emerged
Onto a spacious plain,
Where they their steeds, from foaming
speed,
To slower paces rein.

Then Buda’s lord to Gabriel said:
“’Tis sad, men are so blind,
With outward forms, their consciences,
And others’ then to bind.

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

Thus Bela, who my brother is,
By darkness captive held,
Would in it Christiana hold
And to himself her weld,
Against her heart's conviction strong,
Against my godly right,
And clear I see, to set her free,
We'll be compelled to fight."
The bard then answered: "My fair lord,
Thy conscience well can rest
At ease, in this thy warfare
Which is forever blest.
The Christian's warfare is his life;
Not peace, but Christ, the sword
Did come to bring, for holy strife
For freedom of His word.
From sin and death He made us free,
And puts us in the right,
By faith, of our inheritance;
Our living in the light
Is strife and conflict, it to hold;
If it be darkened or lost,
To strive to win it back again;
And thus against the host
Of darkness, to enjoy it.
Thus is thy conflict blest,
And zeal and ardor in it
Must give thy conscience rest.
To God thus art thou faithful,
To right, to plighted love,
And with the joys of freedom He
Thy conflict will approve."
"Thank God," the lord of Buda said,
"The Christians' warfare is blest,

A Song of Faith

And zeal and ardor in it,
Must give the conscience rest.
I plainly feel the rest of zeal;
My soul rests on the wings
Which upward bear and cast down care
Of past, imperfect things.
My course I see, in truth's fair light;
The conflict, in the soul,
'Gainst wickedness and error must,
In life, itself unroll,
Before from ruins can arise
The bride of humanity,
With stars in tresses streaming far,
And kiss the bride of the sky.
Oh! speed my course, to free my bride!
Ye angels, lend your wings!
Ye winds of Heaven, fleetness add!
Thou Earnest of unseen things,
Display the might of truth's fair light,
Both time and space o'ercome!
That, on our way to liberty,
We speed our journey home."

But now they to a streamlet came,
With shade-trees on its brink,
And stopped themselves, and steeds as
well,
For a refreshing drink.
Said Buda's lord to Gabriel:
"The water of life shall flow,
At home, with Christiana fair,
And thou with us must go,
To preach the Gospel, in my land,
To every soul there free,

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

In its pure light to worship God,
As he or she may see."
"God bless thee," answered Gabriel,
"And bless thy peaceful reign,
And, at thy side, thy loving bride!
And, since thou me dost deign,
Unworthy though I be, to call,
To preach the Gospel light,
I do accept, with prayer to God,
That I may do it right.
Unworthy I accept with joy;
Hail, holy office, hail!
The glory of thy ministry
Of power can never fail.
Hail, Holy Ghost of Pentecost!
To whom the office belongs,
To lead poor souls from sin's dark doles,
By faith, with joyful songs,
To grace, in fellowship with saints,
On earth and high in Heaven;
All hail, thou holy office, hail,
To earth from Heaven given!
By thy blest ministry on earth,
Fair freedom would prevail;
But, in the time of anti-Christ,
Thee, holy office, I hail!
When thou art seldom looked upon,
As service of love to men,
But into ruling thou art turned,
And power o'er men to reign;
Usurping what belongs to God,
Man's part is left undone;
God grant, that I may do my part,
And thus His blessing own!"

A Song of Faith

To Ladislaus he turned and said:
 "Alas! fair Buda's lord!
I see the clouds of darkness rise
 Against God's holy word.
God bless thee and thy tender bride;
 From thy loins going forth,
A seed, by winds of Winter driven,
 And settling in the north,
I see, and shadows of the time,
 When from it there shall rise
A glowing spark, who, like a lark,
 Shall fill the clearing skies.
Then shall this office honored be,
 In its pure Gospel light,
And spread the kingdom of the free,
 With Spirit's peaceful might;
Then all the Western nations and,
 Beyond, the Western strand
The Gospel's blessings shall enjoy,
 Proceeding from thy land;
Then Cincinnattus of the West
 Will sever the last tie
Which bound her to the Old, and thus
 The bride of humanity
Will rise, with stars in streaming locks,
 And kiss the bride of the sky."
"What glory! Christiana fair!
 What joy!" said Buda's lord,
"That the pure Gospel, through thy heir,
 Again shall be restored!
What unction will our nuptials seal!
 What joy our hearts unite!
Since from the glorious future shines
 On us such a glorious light!"

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

Again, as fleeing from the past,
Nor with the present content,
He, on the wings of pregnant time,
Was on the future bent.
Raised to the skies, his fair blue eyes
His winged desire beamed;
And all his heroes followed him,
While all the world back-streamed,
As though he'd mount and fly away,
With her, with her, to unite;
Since from the glorious future shone
On them such a glorious light.

A storm came from the mountain down,
With dashing thunderbolts,
And driving a herd of horses wild,
With frantic yearling colts,
Straight into the course of speeding
horse;
These turned to panic wild,
And with dismay was filled the day
Which erst so bright had smiled.
On splashing clay the rider lay,
And felt the storm-dashed ground;
And without rein, the darkened plain
His steed dashed frantic 'round;
The storm sulphuric darkness poured,
Streaked with sulphuric flame,
And ever louder and louder roared,
As stronger down it came.
It dashed all grace from Heaven's face,
All courage, from their eyes,
And filled their hearts with trembling
That rumbled in the skies;

A Song of Faith

Before them trembled huge and loud
The mountain, with turmoil;
Like on a sponge, on earth they plunge,
Exhausting all their toil.

But Buda's lord bethought him now,
And on his shining shield,
With Balmung strong, he struck a
gong,

And, o'er the storm-dashed field,
The sound, all sounds ennobling,
And driving away all fear,
And giving courage to all hearts,
Is borne to every ear.

In order, soon the heroes mount,
Amid the storm and rain,

And to the bard spake Ladislaus:
"Now show us the way again."

The bard led onward up the mount,
Till night upon the top,
With red on western white and blue,
Did signal them to stop.

That night, like many others,
From memory's page was swept,
By wings of timeless slumber;
For all weary slept,

From late to early, less a dream,
And rose with the morn's first dawn,
To break their fast, with light repast,
And speed their journey on.

Then soon the slope descending,
They saw, on the plain ahead,
The river, with the castle-fort
Which quick impression made;

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

For it threw back upon their track
The rays of the rising sun
Which, slanting o'er the mountain's
 crest,
Did bear their vision on.
The sight thus hurt them, for a spell,
And Ladislaus the most;
For, with it, to his inner eye,
There came a swarming host
Of painful thoughts from former
 times,
As when, in summer days,
You see the swarms of biting gnats,
Along the sun's bright rays.
But soon these swarms were scattered,
And, pausing, he looked askance
At Gabriel beside him there,
And catching his meaning glance,
Just into speech about to break,
He cut it short with his own,
And thus he spoke, with eager look,
While all on the plain looked down:
"Ha! there is the castle prison!
A cot of crumbling clay!
Our Christiana thence to free,
Behold, we're coming to-day!
Oh! crumble and fall and bury all
Thy memories so dark
In the debris of tyranny!
Humanity's bride shall mark,
How, like a phoenix, from the dust,
Fair Christiana shall rise,
To greet the stars of liberty
And look on Freedom's skies!"

A Song of Faith

And wept the lord of Buda fair,
With sorrow turning to joy;
His purpose rose invincible,
Which he must soon employ,
To come to faith's enjoyment;
For on the plain, behold
A mighty force with sword and horse,
Whose air their meaning told.
Then he to all his heroes spake:
"To yonder fort's our way;
It Christiana holds, and we
Must free her, this fair day;
Ye see those mounted warriors,
Their meaning, too, is plain;
To fight them right, or not at all,
We equally disdain;
For but the castle is our aim,
If they there thwart our course,
Our weapons bright are guided right
E'en by our course's force."
He spake, and the force of thunder
Pervaded each loyal breast,
And deeply rolled, in armor bold,
And trembled high each crest.
As when an earthquake thundering,
With force, the mountain shakes,
The trees on the slope all trembling,
While earth from under them breaks
And carries them down, with waving
crown,
And strong precipitate force,
So down abreast, with waving crest,
The heroes take their course.
Nor can the plain their speed detain,
But straight, as beast of the kind

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

Which out of the brush leaps, with a
rush,
And leaves confusion behind,
They hold their straight course onward,
But there the mounted horde
Did forward sway into their way,
With ready lance and sword.
Too bravely; they were ridden down,
And scattered, like the leaves,
Out on the edge of forest brown,
Through which the whirlwind heaves.

The alarm sounds to the castle on,
And Christiana heard,
And all her soul with trembling
Of joyous hope was stirred.
But Bela with his priest came forth,
And heard, with sad alarm
And frightened haste, the sad report
Of battle, loss and harm.
And haste, forsooth, was needed,
For Ladislaus came up;
To him with ire lord Bela cried,
With loud, hoarse voice, to stop,
And seemed to seek, yet more to
speak;
But Ladislaus then said:
"What right hast thou to stop us here,
Upon our homeward raid?"
"But ye the castle do intend,"
Said Bela, with shrinking eye;
"Of course the castle we intend,
And well thou knowest why;
And if the right have any might,
Thou'll yield it, on our word;

A Song of Faith

Else by our sword we'll prove our
word,"

Said noble Buda's lord.

The priest then spake for Bela:

"Hold off your heretic hands!

This castle is held by power eld

Which rules, on earth, all lands;

And by the hand of empire grand,

Here in this Eastern world,

And East and West and old and new,

Against you will be hurled,

If you but dare to enter there!

Fair Christiana is held,

By power of his authority,

To whom she belongs of eld."

Fair Ladislaus made answer free:

"Let East and West combined,

And land with land united be,

In ties of body and mind,

And world and worlds more ancient,

By power more ancient still,

All, all be joined together,

To hold yon castle, I will,

I will, by a right more sacred,

I will, by a stronger right,

Proceed, in my course, to take it,

And lead my bride to the light."

Then arms on arms clashed loudly,

And bloody battle ensued,

To many heroes fatal,

As rightly the heart had rued,

(But for the cause in which it was,)

Of generous Buda's lord,

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

And bathed in blood of brotherhood
Were Christians' lance and sword.
As when a conflagration hot,
In barn, with harvest piled,
From inward self-combustion caught
Breaks out, in destruction wild,
And every effort, it to quench,
But makes it all the worse,
So raged and raved the battle dire,
With self-increasing force.
First Hornbog there to Lythke,
From priestly instruction, said:
"We to the church obedient are,
And she must be obeyed,
When right or wrong instructing us;
Obedience makes it good;
So, back, ye rebel heretics!"
And threatening forth he stood.
In haste brave Lythke answered:
"Obedience! thou art not born
To it, but unto service dark
And slavery loud and shorn
Of every ray from light of day,
And thinkest us to enslave,
As ye now Christiana hold,
Whom we have come to save?"
And haste, indeed, was needed,
For Hornbog forward sprang,
Like vulture unto eagle,
With sharply flashing fang;
So he, with sword and flashing word,
And terrible was the clang,
As on brave Lythke's ready shield
Its strooks resounding rang.

A Song of Faith

But soon it pierced his armor bright,
And coldly entered his heart,
His soul, from body sinking down,
To Heaven doth depart.
And Lothar felt the anguish deep,
And said: "O brother dear!
Though nobly fallen, I must weep!
What darkness have we here?
Oh! spur me on, to strike it down!"
And 'gainst Hornbog he flew,
And into his strooks and earnest looks
The force of rage he threw.
Soon, soon was Hornbog's shield, which
for
Defense he had taken, broke,
And he most surely had gone down
Beneath another stroke,
When to his right another knight
Of Bela's heroes rushed,
And turned the glave of Lothar brave
Which Hornbog surely had crushed.
Then, joining of these another came,
And, then, another of those,
And so on ever more and more,
In gory battle they close,
Untold, alas! and let it pass!
Howbeit, when Hornbog fell,
All stripped of breath and gored to
death,
It was, with his blood to swell
The bloody stream which covered him;
It darkly closed his eyes,
With friends and foes there lying close,
And blurred the light of the skies.

Book IV—Canto the Fifth

Meanwhile the same to pass there came,
Albeit, on larger scale,
Where Buda's lord, with Balmung's
sword,

O'er Bela did prevail.

Lord Bela falling cried aloud:

"Light triumphs, in the right!

'Nearer to God' thy course hath been,

But mine, down into night!

'Enough' to have has been my course,

'Enough,' here in this world;

My shield is torn, my motto worn

And now forever furled."

His last words gurgled gorily;

The gore closed o'er his eyes,

With friends and foes there lying close,

And blurred the light of the skies.

But Ladislaus there lingered not;

With Lothar and Gabriel,

And with the rest victorious;

Yet grieving for those who fell,

He hastened to the castle on,

And cut the iron bar

Which held the gate, with Balmung's
weight,

And shoved it wide ajar.

Rejoicing in their victory,

They enter the castle halls,

And, with the tread of liberty,

Resound the ancient walls;

To this all doors fly open wide,

And Christiana, in tears

Of joy triumphant, glorious,

And, hailing her lord, appears.

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